



Identity, stress and trauma

a new workshop with **Merete Holm Brantbjerg**
October 1-3 2021 in London

Integrating our experiences related to traumatic and stressful events is challenging on many levels:

- ✚ How do we understand what happened?
- ✚ How do we respond to what we experienced - both to what we saw and heard and our own reactions?
- ✚ How has our self image and our world image been impacted?
- ✚ How has the experience of "who I am in the world" and "who I am in the society I live in" been impacted?

The focus of this workshop is to explore the link between the development of identity and trauma healing.

Through Merete's interest in both identity and brain development during the teen years, she saw a parallel between the turbulence we go through in youth and the turbulence we often experience after a traumatic event. Left hemisphere brain functions, like verbal language and linear thinking, matter in the formation of a stable identity. These functions move into the background or are overwhelmed, both in trauma and in the early teens, where more chaotic states of consciousness become more dominant.

Healing following a traumatic event will thus often involve an identity crisis - "the world" is no longer the same. Healing demands a revision and an expansion that can help build a bridge between the instinctual and chaotic experiences related to the traumatic event and the personality.

How do we get chaos and structure to cooperate in a new functional identity formation?

What to expect in this workshop

Psychomotor, systems-oriented and cognitive skill training will be used as methods that can be supportive as we travel the path from chaos and upheaval to a widening of our perception of ourselves and of the world, so that traumatic and stressful experiences can be integrated instead of either being dissociated or over-identified with.

Skills, like orienting in factual reality and centering in your own body, are crucial in this process and will be trained in the workshop.

The concept *Post Traumatic Growth* will be touched upon and related to the skill training. Typical positions in identity development (James Marcia) will also be presented and related to the processes we experience in ourselves and others in the aftermath of a traumatic or stressful event.

Workshop-leader: Merete Holm Brantbjerg, bodypsychotherapist, member of the Danish Psychotherapist Organisation and of EABP, founder of Relational Trauma-therapy - international trainer.

Date: Friday 1, Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 October 2021

Times: 9:30am to 5:30pm all days

Venue: [St Mary Abbots Centre](#), Vicarage Gate, London W8 4HN

Fee: for this course is £ 465 with early bird payment prior to August 15, and then £535 with later payment (the raise in the fee is to bring it in line with Merete's workshops held in other countries, especially in Denmark).

Sign up opens 1st July. A link will be sent just prior to this.

If you would like to make a non-binding expression of interest now, please email Kerensa at moaiku.admnuk@gmail.com

By booking you are entering into a contract with Merete Holm Brantbjerg to pay for your place even if unforeseen circumstances prevent you from attending. If the workshop is cancelled, we will refund your payment.

If the Covid19 pandemic inhibits running the workshop physically, it will be changed to online. The price for the online version will be £330 with payment prior to August 15, and then £370 with later payment.

Introducing the method - Relational Trauma therapy

In Relational Trauma therapy psychomotor exercises (ROST) are used to open defensive patterns. Skills and resources held in the muscle-system are awakened and with that our capacity for regulating emotions and arousal-states can grow.

Through the process of "dosing", the body exercises are adapted by each participant, building an inner authority to choose between opening or respecting and valuing the defensive patterns as they are supported by the body.

This bodily skill training is based in knowledge of tension and low energy (hyper- and hypo-response) in the muscles and connective tissue as defense-mechanisms. Both high and low energy behaviors are valued equally, however regulation of low energy is addressed first which supports both an unusual group-dynamic and inner dynamic.

The goal of Relational Trauma therapy is to build a holding environment where emotions and survival reactions can become mutually regulated, especially those states that have been held in isolation and dissociation. **The psychomotor skill-training supports self-regulatory capacity and systemic group-work is used to build the capacity for mutual resonance and regulation.**

The psychotherapeutic growth process in the workshop happens through active exploration, systemic group-work and reflection. Growth in your professional capacity is supported by widening your capacity for knowing and owning aspects of being human in your own body and mind through direct experience, in resonance with yourself and others.