

SFCT Essentials (Schema-Focused Cognitive Therapy)

About as close as we get to working out “what makes people tick”.

A 3-day course for 6-15 people.

Executive Summary:

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy has taken the therapeutic world by storm over the last couple of decades, and has produced some very good results across a variety of conditions. For many professionals it is the default approach to therapy.

Even so, for some patients, perhaps especially those with personality disorder, CBT is not especially effective, and it is for such patients that Schema-Focused CT has developed. Pioneered by Jeffrey Young it pays much more attention to the patient's (early) experience and their development of 'maladaptive schemas'.

A schema might be defined as “a package of Behavioural, Biological and Emotional responses and Cognitive changes which can be triggered by a stimulus which in some way resembles a previous stimulus that produced that package of responses”. So the hypothesis is that – for example - a baby left to cry (a life-threatening event when a baby) may develop an 'abandonment schema' and so feel distress of 'life-threatening proportions' when, as an adult, their work-mates go off for a drink while forgetting to tell them.

Course Aims:

The course aims to educate delegates about the nature of schemas, how they come about and what effects they may have in adult life. Then to apply that knowledge to individual people and patients, to identify what schemas a person may possess, to assess which schemas are adaptive and which are maladaptive. Then to examine ways of altering the maladaptive schemas, or their effects.

Course Structure:

- Why SFCT? What's wrong with 'standard' CBT?
- What is a schema? Early maladaptive schemas, definition and origins.
- Schema perpetuation mechanisms: cognitive distortions (e.g. selective attention); self-defeating behavioural patterns, etc.
- Schema coping styles: surrender, avoidance and overcompensation.
- Educating patients about schemas, in an accessible way.
- Techniques for influencing schemas: awareness-raising; logical, evidence-based reasoning; behavioural pattern breaking; using the therapist-patient relationship; and others.

- Risk management: short term, what is the best thing for (a) the client and (b) others to do, when a maladaptive schema is triggered?
- Schemas and substance misuse: why those with certain maladaptive schemas may misuse mood-altering substances.
- Coerced clients: how to work with clients who are obliged to see you, e.g. in forensic settings.
- Case assessments and formulation.
- Evidence-based practice, especially: is it working with this particular patient? How to evaluate progress with individual clients.

What the course will give you:

- You will have a good understanding of what schemas are, both adaptive and maladaptive ones.
- You will gain insight into your own schemas and how they affect you.
- You will understand how schemas perpetuate themselves and, more than that, what may be done to undermine maladaptive schemas.
- You will know about the challenging behaviour that schemas can produce, and the importance of working out what constitutes 'adaptive behaviour'.
- You will be part of what is usually a high-interest, high energy event, where delegates address a fascinating phenomenon and what can be done to work with it.

Delegates' Feedback

Average presentation rating: **96%**



Average relevance rating: **97%**



Written Feedback:

“It’s a wonderful insight into Schema-Therapy. I am now very informed and equipped to utilize this knowledge in my practice. Thank you for a job well done.”

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Over 100,000 professionals have benefitted from attending APT courses; APT tutors are a resource of academic and clinical expertise probably unequalled in the UK.

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