



# 13<sup>th</sup> International Treatment of Personality Disorders Conference 2019

Personalising Effective Treatment

Book of Abstracts



---

## Table of Contents

Day 1: Consumer, Family and Carer Day .....	3
Day 2: Scientific Conference .....	6
Day 3: Clinical Workshop .....	11

---

## Day 1: Consumer, Family and Carer Day

7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Aaron Fornarino**

**Title: Why Me? Turning Points With Borderline Personality Disorder**

Aaron Fornarino, 37, has lived with Borderline Personality Disorder for over 25 years and has navigated through discrimination within the mental health system. Aaron will discuss his personal experience with BPD, what hindered moving forward and what helped. Aaron will also discuss challenges associated with bitterness, resentment, substance abuse and helpful suggestions on how to overcome problems with BPD.

**Sophie Lucas**

**Consumer advocate**

**Title: After the rain, wildflowers bloom**

My range of emotions do scare me, although they are not as scary as they once were. I talk about when I first got diagnosed with mental illness at a young age, and how I felt before, and after the diagnosis. I talk about what school was like for me, as I had just started high school when I was diagnosed with mental illness. How much of a struggle it was, and overcoming the struggle. I talk about being on medication, coming off medication, and going back on medication. I talk about hospital admissions. How I felt during hospital admissions. Further mental illness diagnoses, and how I felt about the different diagnosis.

I talk about the positives I've had in life in between mental health exacerbations, such as traveling overseas, becoming a speaker for Batyr, becoming a Peer Ambassador for SANE Australia. I talk about how I have felt during hospital admissions since receiving my BPD diagnosis. I talk about therapy, which form of therapy has been helpful for me and why. I briefly discuss using skills to help me through rough patches.

**Mahlie Jewell**

**Workshop Title: Art practice as distress tolerance: A lived experience perspective**

Mahlie Jewell explores through this interactive workshop how art practice can be used to regulate emotions, help manage distress and provide alternative mindfulness practices outside the current treatment guidelines. Mahlie will demonstrate how the process of art-making can create a more focused sense of self, direct negative energy and anxiety into alternative positive behaviours. Mahlie will provide hands-on art practice techniques that have enabled her to self-regulate and move through thoughts and feelings safely.

## **Natalie Malcolmson**

### **BPD Awareness ACT**

#### **Workshop Title: Peer-led DBT skills groups: Can they work?**

The peer-led DBT Skills group in Canberra has been focusing on making DBT skills as accessible as possible to people with BPD, BPD traits and emotional regulation difficulties. In our presentation, we would like you to hear from the facilitator, Natalie Malcolmson, on what running a peer-led DBT skills group looks like, before looking at the strengths of having a highly accessible peer-led group, and possible things to be wary of when running a group in this style.

We also have several participants from the group who would like to share their experiences and the effect attending this DBT Skills Group and being a part of the community, it has created, has had on their lives.

Finally, Natalie would like to speak about pathways into running similar groups, as we all believe this model/arrangement can be an extremely beneficial way to get DBT skills out there and would like to help others access similar programs as best we can!

Whilst our group is skills-based only, we also place great importance on holistic aspects of recovery, using a mentor-based approach and creating a life truly worth living. For example, our group attended last year's conference together, and outside of DBT skills group run fundraising events, craft activities and more. We focus on everyone's individual strengths to make this happen, which builds confidence and mastery, as well as a strong support network in which we keep each other on track towards our wellbeing goals.

## **Kyla Cassells**

### **Supporter advocate**

#### **Title: More than bloodlines – supporting chosen family within the mental health system**

Kyla Cassells will explore her experience as chosen family and support person for her best friend of twenty years, Mahlie, who lives with borderline personality disorder. Kyla and Mahlie consider each other chosen family because they have chosen to play a significant role in each other's lives but are not biologically or legally related. Kyla will discuss the experience of supporting Mahlie navigate the public mental health care and hospital systems in Australia. She will examine this experience through the lens of being non-biological family and the challenges and rewards this brings.

## **Brin Grenyer**

### **Project Air Strategy**

#### **Title: Introduction to evidence based care – what you need to know**

The National Health and Medical Research Council published in 2012 the Clinical practice guideline for the management of borderline personality disorder. This

presentation provides an overview of the clinical practice guideline and the specific recommendations for treatment of BPD. There are a number of therapy types that have been evaluated including Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Mentalisation Based Therapy and Transference Focused Therapy. In addition there are a number of treatments that innovate with different durations of therapy, generalised approaches, targets for special groups, and multi-modal approaches. In addition, cost-benefit data provides further evidence for specific types of approaches. The presentation will review the different models of treatment, overview their clinical effectiveness, and provide general guidelines for what are the key considerations in seeking and providing effective treatment of BPD for service users and their families.

**Michelle Townsend**

**Project Air Strategy**

**Title: Priorities for service provision for personality disorder: Perspectives from consumers, carers, and clinicians**

**Co-authors: Ng, F.Y.Y., Chapman, K.A., Gilbert, S., Jewell, M., Chapman, C., Marceau, E.M., & Grenyer, B.F.S**

At our first carer and consumer day in 2017, participants took part in a roundtable discussions about the key ways organisations can improve how they provide services for people with personality disorder. Responses from participants formed three overarching themes; 1) re-orienting approaches to service provision, 2) improving access and availability of treatment, and 3) building capacity of services. This presentation will explore these themes and barriers to treatment as reported by participants.

---

## Day 2: Scientific Conference

8<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Professor Brin Grenyer**

**Director, Project Air Strategy**

Most evidence-based Personality disorder treatments have been developed for implementation by individual clinicians or small groups of clinicians, with no reference or connection to the broader health service or context of patient care. We were commissioned to develop a State-wide personality disorder model of care across a population of 7.8 million people with over 200 hospitals across 17 health districts in NSW Australia. This presentation provides an overview of the development and evaluation of a stepped care model of personality disorder services and provides a narrative history of the learnings and developmental milestones in the journey of developing and implementing the model. Key projects are described including: stepped care brief interventions; early intervention programs for young people including a school program; a working with parents with personality disorder program; community workshops and psychoeducation programs for family and carers; and a broad engagement approach with people with lived experience and models of peer work involvement. The staff training strategy, management engagement strategy, public education and awareness strategy, and research strategy are described and key learnings and highlights from the first 9 years of Project Air are presented.

**Aaron Fornarino**

**Consumer Advocate South Australia**

**Title: Emotionally Unstable Borderline Personality Disordered Male: A Discussion On Challenges Associated In Men With BPD**

Aaron Fornarino, 37, works full-time for the South Australian government and studies a Bachelor of Laws and Legal Practice part-time at Flinders University. Aaron has lived with Borderline Personality Disorder for over 25 years and has navigated through discrimination within the mental health system. Aaron will discuss his personal experience with BPD, what hindered moving forward and what helped. Aaron will also discuss issues relating to gender with BPD and strategies that help.

**Mahlie Jewell**

**Consumer Advocate, Sydney, Australia**

**Title: That pencil saved my life**

The pencil that saved my life explores my personal experience of healing and recovery through art making and highlights how this practice is under-utilised in the treatment of BPD and severe trauma. I explain the impact that art as therapy can have on consumers within an impatient or therapeutic environment to unlock and heal

trauma, withstand emotional distress, minimise and reduce self-harm behaviour as well as build strong trusting relationships with clinical staff. My presentation will show the transformative way the ability to create art can allow people to process difficult and traumatic physical and emotional experiences, connect with themselves mindfully as well as foster supportive and peaceful peer relationships within inpatient units, group therapy settings and improve individual therapy outcomes for people with “treatment resistant” and “adverse presentations” relating to BPD and trauma.

My featured work “warpaint” tells the story of a life within the public mental health system and a journey through the confines of the systemic medical model of care, defying every statistic and prognosis and finding recovery. My aim is to show the ways that health services can access all forms of art making and use them as a powerful and engaging tool, no matter what the diagnosis, setting or restrictions. The pencil that saved my life documents personal recovery from over two decades of self-harm, drug and alcohol dependence, internal and external violence and suicide attempts and celebrates arts pivotal role in my ongoing recovery and wellbeing.

**\*\*please note: the work “warpaint” is moving image with sound and contains clear and explicit content around child abuse, trauma, self-harm and suicide. It may not be appropriate for consumer audiences\*\***

**Professor Ueli Kramer**

**Privat-Dozent, psychotherapy researcher and clinical psychotherapist according to Federal Law, Department of Psychiatry (Institute of Psychotherapy and General Psychiatry Service), University of Lausanne, Switzerland**

**Title: Effective processes in treatment for personality disorder: what science teaches us**

Mechanisms of change in treatments for personality disorders have only started to be elucidated. This talk proposes an overview of the current research findings on evidence-based treatments with a focus on how and why patients with personality disorder change in psychotherapy. By doing so, we will adopt a patient- and relationship-focused approach, putting center stage the changing processes, as opposed to the therapist techniques. Changes in emotional processing and socio-cognitive processing in borderline personality disorder will be discussed. Micro-changes in the therapeutic collaboration are discussed. Whereas most of the research focus on psychotherapy for borderline personality disorder, this talk will also present novel research on mechanisms of change in treatments for patients with narcissistic, histrionic and dependent personality disorder. Each concept will be illustrated with patient verbatim. Direct clinical implications for intervention and psychotherapy with personality disorders are discussed.

**Professor Per Hoglend**

**Institute of Clinical Medicine University of Oslo, Norway**

**Title: What psychotherapists need to know about transference and countertransference in effective treatment of personality disorder**

There is robust evidence that patients with personality disorders experience a high burden of disease, comparable to severe somatic illnesses. A majority of studies indicate that patients with personality disorders have a poorer and slower response to psychotherapy compared to most patients.

Transference interpretation is considered as a core active ingredient in dynamic psychotherapy. In clinical theory there are different positions on when, for whom and under what circumstances transference work is more efficient. Patients with PDs have serious problems in their interpersonal relations. These problems will be activated in some form in the therapeutic relationship, and include the transference, transference enactments, the alliance, therapist countertransference and resistance to treatment. If the therapist does not address this, the patient may easily feel less understood and not so contained by the therapy. This presentation will review studies of transference based psychotherapy compared to none-transference based in the treatment of PD.

Using data from the First Experimental Study of Transference-interpretation (FEST) the main aim of this presentation is to explore how several factors such as patient characteristics, therapeutic alliance, transference work, therapist countertransference, insight, and emotional processing may work together in predicting short term and long-term outcome of dynamic psychotherapy for patients with PD. Several case vignettes and videos from treatment sessions will be shown.

**Lise Laporte**

**McGill University, Canada**

**Title: My Child and Me: A Two Components Program for Parents with Borderline Personality Disorder and their Case Workers**

Many parents with borderline personality disorder struggle with parenting, potentially involving Youth Protection Services. As a professional, working with these parents has its challenges. Typical parenting skills groups offered to this population are not sensitive to their needs and dynamics. To address these issues, we have developed an 8-week DBT informed parenting skills group aimed specifically at helping parent of children aged of 3-12 in this population. The goal is to help them improve their parenting skills through a better understanding of the relationship between their emotions, thoughts and behaviours; and to help better manage their reactivity. In parallel, we have developed a comprehensive training program for case-workers who refer these parents to the program to enable parents to receive additional support while implementing these new skills.

We will briefly present the program, and some preliminary results suggesting changes in parents (n=45) and in case workers (n=75) following their participation in the program My Child and Me.

**Chui-De Chiu**

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong**

**Title: Struggling back to myself: A deficit in shifting visuospatial perspectives in borderline personality disorder**

In this study, we investigated flexibility in perspective shifting and the ability to share other people's emotions in patients with BPD. Cognitive flexibility in shifting between the egocentric perspective and a conflicting altercentric perspective was assessed with a visuospatial judgment task regarding the location of a target in relation to a reference point (left or right). We found that patients with BPD exhibited intact left-right judgment from the egocentric perspective, compared with matched healthy controls, in a task context that the altercentric perspective was not to be considered. Yet, when the altercentric perspective was relevant, they encountered difficulty making the left-right judgment from the egocentric perspective.

In our recent studies this flexibility of resuming the egocentric perspective after adopting the altercentric perspective has been found to be pivotal for sharing other people's emotions. The deficit of stepping back to the egocentric stance during perspective shifting may be a critical factor for the mentalization problem of BPD.

**Charlotte van Schie**

**Project Air Strategy, University of Wollongong, Australia**

**Title: Altered reliving of positive and neutral autobiographical memories in patients with Borderline Personality Disorder**

People meeting the criteria for borderline personality disorder (BPD) often think more negative about themselves and recall their memories in a more negative way. This study aimed to investigate whether reliving positive autobiographical memories can benefit mood and state self-esteem in people meeting the criteria for BPD. Moreover, we aimed to understand which processes may facilitate or obstruct the reliving of memories. Of particular interest is the role of vividness while reliving and the degree to which one can travel back in time to relive a past self. These findings can give insight into the potential of using positive autobiographical memory to improve mood and self-views for people meeting the criteria for BPD.

**Methods:** Three groups were observed while reliving four neutral followed by four positive autobiographical memories in an MRI scanner. One group consisted of people meeting the criteria for BPD (BPD, N = 25), and the other groups of people not meeting the criteria for BPD with either reasonable self-esteem (RSE, N = 33) or low Self-Esteem (LSE, N = 22). After reliving each memory people indicated how good they felt (mood) and how vivid the memory was (vividness). State self-esteem was assessed before and after the reliving autobiographical memories (RAM) task.

**Results:** Mood and self-esteem was lower overall in BPD compared to RSE but did improve from reliving neutral to positive memories. BPD reported overall lower vividness than RSE. Moreover, the precuneus, lingual gyrus and putamen were more

active during reliving compared to reading memories for BPD compared to RSE. More activation in the precuneus and lingual gyrus was related to lower vividness.

Discussion: People meeting the criteria for BPD seem less immersed in reliving both neutral and positive memories as indicated by lower vividness and increased precuneus activation. Despite these differences people meeting the criteria for BPD do benefit of short term mood and self-evaluation improvement from reliving positive memories. These findings underline the potential of autobiographical memories to facilitate emotion regulation and strengthening self-views. Future research is needed to investigate whether a more immersed manner of reliving autobiographical memories may positively affect long term self-views and emotion regulation.

---

## Day 3: Clinical Workshop

9<sup>th</sup> November 2019

### Case Formulation for Personality Disorders : How to Foster Therapist Responsiveness

Presented by Ueli Kramer, PhD University of Lausanne (Switzerland)

#### Educational Objectives

1. Participants will understand the centrality of case formulation for personality disorder.
2. Participants will be familiar with the principles of Plan Analysis and how to formulate a case of a client with personality disorder.
3. Participants will be able to understand how to use this information for a productive relationship formation and how to foster appropriate therapist responsiveness in the psychotherapy process.

#### Abstract

Case formulation is a key component of psychotherapy, and is particularly important when treating cases with personality disorders (Kramer, 2019). Clients with personality disorders regularly challenge the therapist effectiveness, the therapeutic relationship and the therapist focus on central contents. Facing these clients, the therapist needs a clinically meaningful case formulation that is able to explain the client's moments of disruptive experiences.

The present one-day workshop reviews the necessary components of a successful case formulation for personality disorder, by adopting an integrative and disorder-oriented approach. By doing so, the workshop will focus on how therapists can productively take advantage of responsiveness in the therapy process. This will be done using the principles of Plan Analysis (Caspar, 2007), and of the motive-oriented therapeutic relationship.

Research will be presented demonstrating the effectiveness of case formulation in treatments for clients with personality disorders. Clinical material will be presented on video and worked through, then implemented directly into productive client-therapist interactions using role plays.

#### Key References:

Caspar, F. (2007). Plan Analysis. In T. D. Eells (Ed.), *Handbook of Psychotherapy Case Formulations* (2nd edition; pp. 251-289). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Kramer, U. (2019) (Ed.). *Case Formulation for Personality Disorders: Tailoring Psychotherapy to the Individual Client*. Cambridge, MA, USA: Elsevier.

<https://www.elsevier.com/books/case-formulation-for-personality-disorders/kramer/978-0-12-813521-1>

Kramer, U., Berthoud, L., Keller, S., & Caspar, F. (2014). Motive-oriented psychotherapeutic relationship facing a patient presenting with Narcissistic Personality Disorder: A case study. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy, 44*, 71-82. doi: 10.1007/s10879-013-9249-5

**Ueli Kramer, PhD**, is Privat-Dozent, psychotherapy researcher and clinical psychotherapist according to Federal Law, at the Department of Psychiatry (Institute of Psychotherapy and General Psychiatry Service), University of Lausanne, Switzerland. He holds an adjunct appointment at the Department of Psychology, University of Windsor, Canada.

His research focuses on process and outcome in psychotherapy, in particular the mechanisms of change in treatments of personality disorders and case formulation in personality disorders. He is a broadly trained clinician, working from an integrative psychotherapy perspective.

Dr. Kramer is the co-recipient of the 2015 Inger Salling Award, the recipient of the 2016 Outstanding Early Career Achievement Award of the Society for Psychotherapy Research, of the 2016 Hamburg Award for Personality Disorders and of the 2018 Marvin Goldfried New Researcher Award of the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration.