In person or via Zoom,
with CE credits available for Social Workers and Counselors

For more information on upcoming trainings, email Howard Steele steeleh@newschool.edu

Reflective-Functioning (RF) Training

Reflective functioning (RF), also known as 'mentalization', has been shown to overlap with mental health in adults, and has been the focus of a number of recent books and articles detailing its vital place in developmental and clinical research. The RF concept was first developed by Peter Fonagy, Mary Target, Miriam Steele and Howard Steele. The validity base for this construct comes from its reliable application to Adult Attachment Interviews (AAIs). RF scores derived from parents' AAIs are powerfully predictive of child outcomes in terms of mental health, self and social development. RF scores derived from AAIs obtained from patients (before and after psychotherapeutic treatment) reveal positive and significant changes.

This 3-day training over Zoom is aimed at advanced graduate students and professionals aiming to score RF in Adult Attachment Interviews, or other narrative material. The training is generally held in January and June. It provides a detailed inside look at the evolution of the RF coding manual and how to apply the RF coding manual to AAIs with discussion of other narrative material.

Adult Attachment Interview Institute

The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan, & Main, 1985), a semistructured interview of 18 questions, concentrates on eliciting a sense of what probably happened to individuals in childhood and a picture of the degree to which they have evaluated those experiences. As a clinical intake tool, the AAI yields a relatively deep social history at the level of experience and symbolic representation, with a particular focus on attachment-related experiences. "Deep" in this context refers to material that reflects both early memories and modes of responding to (or coping with) experience stored at diverse levels of awareness. In this gathering of information, the AAI allows for the assessment of the following three features of the respondent's inner world: (a) the nature of the speaker's probable childhood experiences with his or her parents; (b) the nature of the speaker's mental representations of each parent, including their emotional stance toward them; and (c) the extent to which loss or other traumatic events or life circumstances have influenced their development and current personality organization (Steele & Baradon, 2004).

Professors Howard Steele and Miriam Steele are members of the Consortium of AAI Trainers and hold the AAI institute over a two week period once every 12-18 months. Following the institute, participants will have the further opportunity to become a Certified AAI Coder.