

ESSPD Academy Newsletter, December 2022

Dear colleagues,

In October 2022, the European Society for the Study of Personality Disorders (ESSPD) had the pleasure to host its 6th International Congress on Borderline Personality Disorder and Allied Disorders in a virtual format. The event featured a number of outstanding sessions, updating us with where the field of personality disorders currently is moving. The conference was chaired by Babette Renneberg whom I would like thank warmly for her outstanding leadership at the head of the ESSPD over the past two years, a true contribution to ESSPD during these times of uncertainty.



Ueli Kramer

The topic of the congress was "Change for a better future", a topic I would expect would continuously impact our field in a lasting manner. If you are interested, please check out the resources on our website, in particular the freely available Presidential Debate, and the featured interviews with leading experts. In order for you to be able to benefit from the entirety of the resources associated with the 6th ESSPD Congress, we decided to make the recorded content of the event available, especially for those who did not have the chance to register on time to take part in the meeting. The on-demand content will be available upon a fee until the end of the year 2022. The current newsletter highlights events from our 2022 get-together.

While it was great to connect with many of you at the virtual meeting, many may also have missed the chemistry, personal contacts and fun involved in an in-person meeting. At the ESSPD, we are mindful of the need to meet again, and we are already planning the 2024 conference and will be able to announce the date and location in a few months: I intend to invite you personally in an e-mail. We anticipate that the 2024 ESSPD conference will be the catch-up of so many years without in-person meetings in Europe in the field of Personality Disorders. Since Sitges in September 2018, six years will have passed without us meeting in person.

In the meantime, the ESSPD board, under my leadership for the next two years, will work hard to create more opportunities for all of us to be connected in various ways. For example, stay tuned as ESSPD proposes a series of webinars on pressing issues in the field of personality disorders, such as early intervention, intervention on parenting and the treatment of pathological narcissism (January – May 2023). More will come. For example, early career researchers in Europe interested in research on personality disorders are invited to join us in the picturesque Crêt-Bérard, Switzerland in late August 2023, for our Third ESSPD Summer School: "Personality Disorders: Developmental Pathways and Interventions". Deadline for application is February 1st, 2023 and full scholarships for early career researchers working in Eastern Europe are available! A workshop conference is in the planning for June 2023 and more information will be forthcoming on our website very soon.

Dear colleagues, the ESSPD wishes you to contribute even more actively to the Academy of Excellence we define for now over ten years. For this reason, the ESSPD board will reach out to you early January 2023 with a poll on TEACH and LEARN and your potential contributions to the Academy. Take 20 minutes in the beginning of the year for our society and let us know in this poll what specific topics you want to learn about and which topics you are interested to teach to other ESSPD members, and the larger scientific and clinical communities, in one of our featured Academy activities.

I look forward to meeting many of you at one or the other ESSPD event next year. I wish you a blessed and plentiful end of the year season, and a productive and stimulating 2023!

Ueli Kramer
President of the ESSPD

2022 ESSPD Congress: Comment on the Presidential Debate



CHANGE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

6th International Congress on Borderline Personality Disorder and Allied Disorders 2022

Virtual | 10–12 October 2022

In her presidential discussion at the 2022 ESSPD Borderline congress, Babette Renneberg invited a panel of experts to exchange opinions about the question how a better future for people with Borderline Personality Disorder could look like. Åse-Line Baltzersen and Aaron Fornarino contributed to the discussion based on their own lived experience with BPD. John F. Clarkin, Clinical Professor for Psychology in Psychiatry from Cornell University as well as Brin Greyner, Senior Professor of Psychology at the University of Wollongong added their perspectives as researchers and clinical experts. The event opened the opportunity to focus on relevant questions like: How can we create treatment opportunities that not only reduce stigma but also help patients to become who they are? And how can we help patients to regain the capacity to work and love?



Julia Sieg

Throughout the discussion, the need for integrative care emerged as the central topic. From her lived experience, Åse-Line Baltzersen recalled that not only psychotherapy helped her, but a whole network of people who supported and respected her. It was in the togetherness with others, she said, that she was able to be herself and to feel connected. A diagnosis of BPD affects not only the individual but also family members and others at schools and at the workplace. The wider network could become a valuable resource for recovery if support and psycho-education about BPD is provided. Brin Greyner argues that within the professional field we should not only train specialists in the treatment of BPD but also focus on training generalists such as nurses and general practitioners to better recognize and support people with BPD. Fostering peer support programs might be another solution. Interventions that target the entire social system, including schools, work, family members, and partners might be one road toward a future with less stigma and more integration

The second focus was on early intervention and adolescent care. Most adolescents are faced with stigmatizing and punitive reactions from caregivers instead of compassionate understanding. An early diagnosis might disrupt trajectories of long-term impairment. Here it is important to comprehensively explain the diagnosis. Aaron Fornarino described how a diagnosis without psycho-education can even worsen the stigma. Finally, John Clarkin points out that there still is much research needed to explore how to best help adolescents with BPD.

Following the talks, a lively discussion evolved. You can find the link to the full video [here](#).

Julia Sieg

2022 ESSPD Congress: Symposium on Antisocial Personality Disorders

During the 6th International ESSPD Congress on Borderline Personality Disorder and Allied Disorders 2022, held online on October 10 to 12, 2022, the ESSPD Section for the Study and Treatment of Antisocial Personality Disorder and Psychopathy has organized an invited symposium with a collection of three well-attended talks.

Within the realm of personality pathology, psychopathy and antisocial personality disorders (ASPD) are arguably the two constructs that hold most relevance for the criminal justice system in addition to their relevance in mental health practice. Although ASPD was originally meant to operationalize the construct of psychopathy, empirical research on psychopathy and ASPD has grown largely separately with a disproportionately greater focus on the former as opposed to the latter. The aim of the present invited symposium is to take stock of recent advances in the conceptualization, assessment, and convergence of these constructs.

Against this background, the symposium included three nicely interwoven presentations that address fundamental issues on the conceptualization and assessment of these constructs, proposing innovative and almost revolutionary views on the future of this field of study.

Dr. Luca Malatesti (University of Rijeka) discussed a philosophical analysis of the mental health status of psychopathy and antisocial personality more broadly, with important implications for considerations of criminal responsibility. Two important take home messages from this presentation concerned the difficulties of balancing between a dimensional view of personality pathology and the classification necessities often implied in the legal system, and the often neglected yet important role of context in the manifestation of antisocial or psychopathic traits.

Dr. Inti Brazil (Radboud University of Nijmegen) addressed recent debates on the constituent elements of psychopathy and how to best assess them. Dr. Brazil discussed the crucial debates in the field about whether putatively adaptive traits and overt indices of antisocial behavior should be included in the conceptualization and assessment of antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy. The bottom line of this presentation was the argument that the field should not remain entrenched in long standing debates and rather open up to other fields to complement current practices in the assessment of these clinical constructs.

Finally, Dr. Jaime Anderson (Sam Houston State University) discussed taken and missed opportunities for increased convergence between psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder in the most recent proposals of the mainstream diagnostic systems (i.e., DSM-5 and ICD-11). In addition, Dr. Anderson stressed the importance of paying more explicit attention to how assessment of these traits should account for differences based on demographic factors.

Important considerations emerged from this last talk and across all talks included in this symposium concerned the importance (1) to carefully define (and if necessary refine) the theoretical conceptualization of antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy before – and as a guide for – developing and testing specific operationalizations in assessment instruments; and (2) to reconsider the need to maintain the two as separate diagnostic entities.

Carlo Garofalo

2022 ESSPD Congress: Symposium on Social Cognition and Interpersonal functioning in Personality Disorders

The ESSPD 2022 Conference hosted, for the first time, a special symposium of the ESSPD Section “Social Cognition and Interpersonal functioning in Personality Disorders”. The Section aims to understand variations in social cognitive and interpersonal processes and their implications for characterising and treating individuals with personality disorders (PD) in clinical every-day life. In this symposium, members of the Section coming from different theoretical perspectives and with different scientific and clinical backgrounds presented findings of their recent work.

We felt that the symposium was an enriching experience, as the various talks covered different areas within the large field of interpersonal functioning in PD. Furthermore, the studies presented adopted diverse methodological approaches ranging from self-reports to experimental paradigms using behavioural and neuronal outcome measures. Celine De Meulemeester showed how core clinical features of Borderline PD (BPD), such as the intense longing for connection coupled with the simultaneous fear of enmeshment, might be related with difficulties in self-other distinction due to impairments in the representation of one's own body and its boundaries, especially in proximal social situations. Zsolt Unoka reported on how BPD patients' rejection sensitivity bias is associated with altered neural responses specifically to childhood rejection scenes. Stefanie Lis addressed the issue on whether the Covid-19 Pandemic, with the needs of social distancing and the necessity of wearing mouth-nose covers, affect feeling of loneliness and the accurate appraisal of interpersonal touch and social judgements in BPD. Emanuele Preti proposed a novel instrument to reliably assess the well-known untrustworthiness bias exhibited by BPD patients, i.e., their exaggerated appraisal of whether others will reject, be dishonest with, negatively judge, or otherwise emotionally hurt oneself.

We are grateful to the Conference organizers for giving us the possibility to put together this multi-faceted symposium, and for the chance of having a stimulating discussion on clinical implications across different theoretical backgrounds. As ESSPD Section, we look forward to continuing working together to contribute to “changes for a better future” for the benefit of those affected by PD.

Chiara De Panfilis

Stefanie Lis

Zsolt Unoka

For the ESSPD Section on Social cognition and Interpersonal Functioning in Personality Disorders

2022 ESSPD Congress: Clinical Discussions

Treating Disruptive Behaviour in Session: Using the principles of DBT

One of the innovations this year at ESSPD was to have a series of clinical seminars on challenging topics that come up when treating people with behaviours that are identified as personality disorders. I had the privilege of leading one of these alongside a long-standing colleague and friend Weis van den Bosch. Weis and I trained together in DBT in Seattle in 1994 and first presented in a symposium on our early endeavours in DBT at a conference in Dublin in 1995. We had great fun working together again. Our session was entitled *Treating Disruptive Behaviour in Session: Using the principles of DBT*. We began with Weis outlining some of the central organising principles of DBT. She then went on to show part of an initial session that she had with a client with behaviours identified as anti-social personality disorder. In the session we saw how Weis utilised central principles of DBT to begin to elicit commitment from a person with a strong wish to die. I think all of us present were impressed with Weis' non-judgemental method of confronting the problems related to the client's behaviours whilst remaining validating of his perspectives. I followed up with a brief summary of the principles of treating therapy-interfering behaviours in DBT emphasising the importance of non-judgemental behavioural descriptions and conducting behavioural and solution analyses to solve these problems in engagement in therapy. I showed an unscripted role-play of how to use these principles with a client who struggled to stay on topic in session and was plagued with worries that the treatment would be ineffective. Weis and I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to present together once again and we hope those of you who were there found it useful.



Michaela Swales

Michaela Swales
ESSPD Editorial Board

Therapeutic Work on Self-Esteem

In a new format adapted to the virtual context, Stephan Doering and Jon Taylor discussed a clinical case in which difficulties related with self-esteem were apparent. As moderator of the discussion, I proposed the clinical material and enjoyed the unfolding of the two psychotherapy perspectives. Transference-focused psychotherapy (TFP) defines problems in self-esteem as crystallization of past experiences that play out in the therapeutic relationship, while Compassion-focused psychotherapy (CFT) stresses the evolutionary context of adaptive behavior to explain the patient's relationship difficulties. While the underlying theories sound quite different, it is remarkable that the discussion of the case material yielded a large overlap in terms of the clinical strategies used in both psychotherapy approaches. It stroke me that the focus on the therapeutic relationship, with all the layers and complexities represents a nod for both experts which helps to understand the depth of the clinical problems and also represents a hub for effective intervention.



Ueli Kramer

Ueli Kramer
President of the ESSPD

2022 ESSPD Congress: Clinical Discussions

Clinical discussion on how to handle dissociation during sessions

Three leading clinical experts discussed with Svenja Taubner as chair (University Heidelberg, Germany) how to address dissociation during psychotherapy of Personality Disorders: Christian Schmahl (Central Institute for Mental Health Mannheim, Germany) presenting Dialectical Behavioral Therapy focusing on comorbid PTSD (DBT-PTSD), Eva Rüfenacht (Medical University Geneva, Switzerland) presenting Mentalization Based Treatment with trauma focus (MBT-TF) as well as Arne Hoffeman (EMDR Institute Germany) presenting Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). This discussion was set up to discuss the growing convergence between classic evidence-based PD treatments and classic PTSD treatments to treat developmental and complex trauma in PDs. All three panelists presented the respective approach by demonstrating theoretical models, change theories and interventions on a case example. Christian Schmahl elaborated on the difficult to diagnose differences between epileptic and dissociative seizures that was already described by Freud and Breuer in their studies on hysteria. In DBT triggers and early warning signs for dissociation are identified and skills are used to give the patient control over dissociation and preparing for the exposure module. During sessions therapists prompt skills whenever dissociation occurs which is monitored every 5 to 10 minutes. Eva Rüfenacht illustrated that in MBT-TF the isolation during and after trauma from others' minds is seen as a traumatizing. Thus, the intervention is performed in a group setting and focuses on connecting with others to address interpersonal hypervigilance and shame, trust and aiming to mentalize the traumatic events. Dissociation is seen as a physiological and psychological state that follows hyperactivation of the central nervous system when in fight/flight is not possible. Dissociation is seen as a curve from immobility to collapse. Dissociation is made a group topic in psychoeducation and also in the open group work. The group can discuss how to discover dissociation in themselves and when watching others, the anxiety to feel this in the group as well as what helps to cope including somatic resources. Arne Hoffmann presents EMDR that focuses on pathogenic traumatic memories. In contrast to more CBT oriented approaches this does not necessarily include prolonged exposure to traumatic events. Dissociation is seen as a defense and protective mechanism that is dissolved by treating the pathogenic memories. In the discussion we identified dissociation as a "bogeyman" that clinicians might be afraid of that could lead to avoiding traumatic issues. We encouraged to revise our views on dissociation as something dangerous and uncontrollable. Furthermore, including more body focused work was appreciated as well as the strong overlap in the treatment of dissociation in the three treatments that were presented.

Svenja Taubner
ESSPD Newsletter Editor



Svenja Taubner,
ESSPD
Newsletter Editor

Upcoming webinars

New pathways to improve early detection and intervention in borderline personality disorder

Michael Kaess, Chair and Director University Hospital of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Bern

Zoom | Monday, January 16, 2023 | 17:30–19:00 CET



Michael Kaess,
Switzerland

The webinar will give an overview on current developments in the field of early detection and intervention in BPD. First, current state of the art will be introduced and justified. Afterwards, new avenues will be presented that range from prevention of BPD via early detection in children to personalized treatment and stepped-care in adolescents. The potential of biomarkers and e-mental health will also be discussed.

[Register Here](#)

Parenting and Mother-Child Interaction

Babette Renneberg, Director of the Outpatient Psychotherapy Treatment Centre at Freie Universität Berlin

Charlotte Rosenbach, Doctor of Psychology, FUB · Institute of Psychology

Zoom | Thursday, March 16, 2023 | 17:00–18:30 CET



Babette
Renneberg,
Germany



Charlotte
Rosenbach,
Germany

Mothers with BPD are often unable to recognize and/or respond (to) their children's needs, are inconsistent in their parenting styles and have difficulties in setting adequate limits. Difficulties in emotion regulation are a core feature of BPD and constitute a severe problem for parenting. As a result, children of mothers with BPD are often missing adequate role models and orientation – and are at high risk to develop dysfunctional behavior patterns themselves. The training “Parenting skills for mothers with BPD” aims to support these mothers to develop positive parenting strategies and thereby to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of dysfunctional emotion regulation strategies.

In the webinar, we will present main aims and therapeutic strategies of the training, supported by video examples and short role plays.

Registration available soon

Advances in the understanding and treatment of pathological narcissism

Zoom | Wednesday, May 31, 2023 | 17:00–18:30 CET

The webinar will offer an overview of current conceptualizations and new perspectives on the study of pathological narcissism. First, the conceptualization and pressing issues in relationship with dimensional conceptions of personality disorders will be discussed. Then, we will discuss principles of intervention which address pathological narcissism, the therapeutic strategies, and discuss research evidence on psychotherapy for pathological narcissism. Finally, the impact of pathological narcissism on the social interaction, family and peers will be discussed.

Registration available soon



Elsa Ronningstam,
USA, Associate Professor
of Psychology, Harvard
Medical School



Eve Caligor, USA,
Clinical Professor of
Psychiatry, Director of
Psychotherapy Division
Training



David Kealy, Canada,
Institute of Mental
Health Canada



Nicholas Day,
Australia, Research
Fellow, School of
Psychology, Faculty of
Arts, Social Sciences and
Humanities



Ueli Kramer,
Switzerland
Department of
Psychiatry,
University of
Lausanne

ESSPD Summer School in Switzerland in August 2023: Q&A session 20 December 2022, 12:00/noon CET by zoom

Dear Early Career Researchers,

We would like to invite you for a short session this coming **Tuesday December 20th, 2022 at noon (12:00 CET)** that we are organising to promote the involvement of early career researchers in the field of Personality Disorders. In this session we will be mainly focusing on the practicalities and content of our "Third ESSPD Summer School: Personality Disorders. Developmental Pathways and Interventions" where also former attendants will share their experiences and what they took home out of it. We particularly encourage early career researchers from Eastern Europe to attend. Please find our summer school flyer on the next page

Moreover, we will also share some information about how you could get involved in the ESSPD and procedure in case you would like to become a member. Hope I have informed you well and look forward to seeing you then!

ESSPD ZOOM is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: ESSPD Summer School in Switzerland in August 2023: Q&A session 20.12. 12:00/noon

Time: Dec 20, 2022 12:00 Brussels

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88579178644?pwd=MEh2YXgrcktVRW5TVUVVakZVNXBfZz09>

Meeting ID: 885 7917 8644

Passcode: 937595

Kind regards,

Mariana Mendoza Alvarez

ESSPD early career representative

Doctoraal Onderzoeker in Medische en Gezondheidswetenschappen

UPC Duffel and Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium

Save the Date! Full Day Workshops in Prague, 9–10 June 2023

Time: 9-10 June 2023

Place: Prague, Czech Republic

Choose 2 out of 3 full-day workshops on Mentalization-based treatment (Prof. Anthony Bateman), Transference focused psychotherapy (presented by Prof. Stephan Doering), or Dialectical behaviour therapy (Prof. Michaela Swales).

Further details (including registration) to follow in 2023.

Third ESSPD Summer School 2023



**Personality Disorders :
Developmental Pathways
and Interventions**



**August 27th – September 2nd, 2023
Crêt-Bérard, VD, Switzerland**


UNIL | Université de Lausanne



The European Society for the Study of Personality Disorders (ESSPD) is proud to announce the third ESSPD Summer School for early career researchers, organized in collaboration with the University of Lausanne, Department of Psychiatry, Institute of Psychotherapy and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Service, with the financial support of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).

The aim of the summer school is to increase the methodological competencies in conducting high quality developmental psychopathology research in the domain of personality disorders. Topics include: developmental psychopathology (i.e., prediction of self-harm and suicide in adolescence), inclusion of family in research designs (i.e., mothers with personality disorders and their offspring), prospective long-term follow-up studies, psychotherapy

research designs (i.e., effectiveness, mediation, moderation), assessment of emotional processing, socio-cognitive processing and reflective functioning in adolescence.

We will adopt a theory-integrative, disorder-oriented and evidence-based approach. Throughout the one-week program, the focus will be on the plurality of methods, their productive use for specific research questions and their creative combinations in order to deepen the understanding of developmental pathways and the effects of prevention and intervention to personality disorders in youth.

Teaching methodologies include interactive presentations, workshop exercises on actual research material, plenary and small group discussions, individual work, speed-talk presentations, playfully structured question-and-answer sessions.

Faculty:



Theodore Beauchaine
PhD, University of Notre Dame (USA)



Chiara De Panfilis
MD, University of Parma (Italy)



Ueli Kramer
PhD, University of Lausanne (Switzerland)



Babette Renneberg
PhD, Freie Universität Berlin (Germany)



Stephanie Stepp
PhD, University of Pittsburgh (USA)



Svenja Taubner
PhD, University of Heidelberg (Germany)

Where? The summer school takes place in a relaxing and inspiring atmosphere at the picturesque retreat center Crêt-Bérard, calmly perching over Lac Léman in Switzerland, one of the largest lakes in Western Europe. Activities as part of a social program will be organized.

When? Sunday, August 27th 2023 (arrival day) – Saturday, September 2nd, 2023 (departure day); 5 full days residential).

For whom? PhD students, MDs, or early post-doctoral fellows affiliated with a European university.

Deadline: Applications by February 1st, 2023 by e-mail to summerschool@esspd.eu. All applications must contain a letter of motivation, a curriculum vitae and a 1-page summary of the relevant research project (in one PDF file). Applications from Eastern Europe are explicitly encouraged.

Full fee EUR 750 (includes registration to all scientific activities, six overnight stays at Crêt-Bérard, all meals/coffee breaks, and organized social activities).

Reduced fee EUR 300 for participants from Eastern European countries (includes registration to all scientific activities, six overnight stays at Crêt-Bérard, all meals and organized social activities).

Important: ESSPD, with funding from SNSF, fully supports financially up to five participants from Eastern European countries (will be paid for: reduced fee and travel expenses). Please attach one letter of support (e.g. from your supervisor) if you are interested to apply for this funding.

2023 ESSPD Summer School Work Group

Ueli Kramer, Babette Renneberg, Svenja Taubner, Chiara De Panfilis, Joost Hutsebaut

ESSPD Academy Newsletter Submissions



Svenja Taubner,
ESSPD
Newsletter Editor

ESSPD Academy Newsletter Submissions

Submissions to the *ESSPD Academy Newsletter* are accepted on an ongoing basis. Subject areas may include issues from clinical practice, views and comments on current development within PD, reports from affiliated societies, member information, national and international events and conferences, research updates on personality disorders and more. We are interested in submissions from practitioners and researchers from within and outside of Europe. The length of submissions should be from 300-800 words and formatted in Word. We suggest that the authors limit their use of references. Please enclose author photos with the text.

The Newsletter Editor is Svenja Taubner. Submissions should be emailed to at:
svenja.taubner@med.uni-heidelberg.de

The corresponding scientific writer is Sophie Liljedahl, Ph. D.,
Email: dr.s.liljedahl@gmail.com



Bo Bach, ESSPD
Editorial Board



Matilde Elices,
ESSPD Editorial Board



Michaela Swales,
ESSPD Editorial Board

Membership Nomination Form

Nominee's name:			
Title:			
Affiliation:			
Email:	City:	Country:	
PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND (psychiatrist, psychologist, nurse, social worker, other):			
NOMINATION CATEGORY (mark with X)			
Researcher	Clinician	Teacher	Other, specify
MAIN FIELD(S) OF INTEREST (NEUROSCIENCES, ASSESSMENT, TREATMENT, PREVENTION, OTHER)			
ACHIEVEMENTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, INNOVATIONS, DISCOVERIES (<i>list 3 most important</i>)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••			
PUBLICATIONS (<i>list 3 most important last 5 years</i>)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••			
HONORS, AWARDS (<i>list 3 most important</i>)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••			
Leadership roles (<i>list 3 most important current or past roles</i>)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••			
What you believe nominee will be able to contribute to the ESSPD			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••			

Names of two nominators (printed letters):	Signatures of two nominators:
Place	Date