

Institute of Psychotherapy

Memory Reconsolidation, Emotional Arousal and Enduring Change in Psychotherapy: Insights, Challenges and Opportunities

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SYMPOSIUM

co-organized by

Swiss Society for Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT-CH)
Institut Universitaire de Psychothérapie, DP-CHUV
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Integration) Swiss Network
in collaboration with the European Federation
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Memories are a guide to the future as much as they are a record of the past, and as such can guide future behavior most adaptively if they can be updated when needed. The discovery that memories can be updated and revised in certain circumstances raises the question of how this phenomenon can be used most effectively for therapeutic purposes. In a recent review article* my colleagues and I proposed that therapeutic change in a variety of modalities, including emotion-focused (EFT), psychodynamic (PDT) and cognitive-behavioral therapy results from the updating of prior memories through a process of reconsolidation that incorporates new emotional experiences. In this talk I will present this model and some of the evidence supporting it, with particular emphasis on its relevance to the clinical practices of EFT and PDT. This model is not without controversy, however, and I will briefly review some of the concerns and counter-arguments, which involve consideration of the existence of multiple memory systems and how interactions between memory and emotion vary in different contexts. I will conclude with some of the exciting areas of future basic and clinical research that follow from this model, including a brief consideration of how change from the perspective of computational neuroscience provides surprising support as well as some challenges for some of the time-honored techniques in EFT.

* Lane RD, Ryan L, Nadel L, Greenberg L. Memory reconsolidation, emotional arousal and the process of change in psychotherapy: New insights from brain science. Behavioral and Brain Sciences 2015; 38:1-19.

PROGRAM

Entrance is free

Welcome by PD Dr Ueli Kramer

Conference by Prof. Richard Lane

Discussions and clinical illustrations by

Dr Catalina Woldarsky Meneses

Dr Gilles Ambresin