

GROUP RADICAL OPENNESS (Foundation level training)

6 zoom sessions of 1.5 hours per week on Thursdays 3-4:30, with assignments.

Dates:

GRO Foundation training is a six week program enabling delegates to start developing Radical Openness Groups, which address the issues of overcontrol in a group-only format. By the end of the course delegates will be able to begin GRO groups although supervision will be required to attain the next practitioner level. This training format recognises that it is impossible to gain effective training in delivery of the treatment until trainees have a group up and running and can practice with clients. Foundation level training provides the theoretical underpinning, basic structural principles and practical tips to get started.

There has been much interest in the construct of overcontrol. It appears that too much control can underpin a range of mental health difficulties, including treatment resistant depression, particular eating disorders and difficult to treat forensic presentations. Group Radical Openness (Booth, Egan & Gibson, 2018) is a group therapy with a growing evidence base, specially adapted for this population. Although informed by the work of Tom Lynch, GRO differs from Lynch's model in that the group is encouraged to form a tribe where members are accountable to each other, rather than the facilitators. The tasks of the group directly address the behavioural deficits evident in this personality presentation, and skills are strengthened through in-vivo behavioural rehearsal. Some of the main exercises and principles by which this is achieved will be described during foundation training.

Dr. Richard Booth is Director of Psychology at St. Patrick's Mental Health Services, Dublin. He has specialised in the treatment of overcontrol for the past seven years. He pioneered skills-only classes for two years and published in this area before co-developing Group Radical Openness (GRO). He was lead author on the GRO paper in the Behaviour Therapist special edition on Radical Openness (2018).

Dr. Rachel Egan is Senior Clinical Psychologist at St. Patrick's Mental Health Service, Dublin. She has over ten years experience in running groups (including group work with sex offenders and using compassion focused therapy in a group format). For the past five years, she has been instrumental in helping to develop the model of GRO and was co-author on the first paper on GRO (2018). She has presented widely on this area and her trainings have a reputation for being lively, entertaining and thoughtful. She is lead author on the first outcome study of GRO.

Richard and Rachel's book for clinicians on Group Radical Openness is due to be published next year.