



RCMC recommended training guidelines for mixed nationality groups in conflict

During times of political and military conflict, trainees may experience various emotions and hold strong opinions toward the nationals of the invading country. Participants not directly affected by the conflict may also feel inclined to voice their views on the matter during training programs.

After consulting with the ISST Training & Certification Advisory Board the RCMC has developed a set of training guidelines to implement when participants are from different national groups in times of war.

The primary goal of every training session is to ensure that participants can learn Schema Therapy concepts and techniques in a safe, warm, and validating environment. Every trainee has an equal right to learn and ask questions to enhance their skills as professionals. However, we understand it is a challenging task with mixed nationality groups in conflict.

We offer the training guidelines below to minimise the potential stress of all the participants during training programs:

Trainer guidelines on managing mixed nationality groups

- Have clear communication regarding the presence of participants of other nationalities. Prior to the training, clearly communicate the nationalities of the trainers and trainees along with the usual information regarding the timing of the training. Predictability and structure are essential for trainees from the invaded country, but would also benefit all the participants.
- Some trainees in mixed groups may experience varying levels of stress during one training day, the trainer should be sensitive to this. At the beginning of the training, inform all trainees that in case of necessity special adjustments can be made, i.e., changing break-out rooms, turning off cameras if feeling overwhelmed, watching the video recording later (if applicable), etc.
- Trainees can be advised to inform the trainer before the training or send a private message during the training, in case any special arrangements are needed.
- It is important that the entire training group understands the circumstances and behaves in a kind and accepting manner.
- Prior to and during the training foster inclusion and acceptance in the spirit of learning Schema Therapy.
- Consider if it is appropriate to place participants of mixed nationalities in conflict into breakout rooms on zoom or in small groups to complete training exercises. Trainers are advised to ask trainees of nationalities in conflict prior to the training if they will feel comfortable being together in break-out rooms or in small groups.

Trainee guidelines

- If the trainee has any questions or concerns, please encourage them to submit those by email prior to the training, so that the trainer can address them before the training.
- It is possible that the content of the training or other participants may trigger the trainee's vulnerability despite the trainer's efforts. We recommend that every trainee checks in on their emotional state and in case of distress tend to their needs to restore the balance that is needed to benefit from the learning process. The trainee may choose to turn their video off, take a few minutes off to comfort themselves, or implement other ways to reduce stress. It would also be helpful if the trainer were sent a private message that the trainee needs some time to rebalance him/herself.
- If participants witness or experience a distressing situation during a training (e.g. air raid or invasion) please remain calm and let the trainer handle the situation. Please try to keep a non-judgemental stance toward other participants and cultivate an atmosphere of respect toward others in these distressing times.

Trainers may choose to send these guidelines for participants to trainees before their training begins or can inform the participants during the first few minutes of the training.

The RCMC committee appreciates the support of all the experts in formulating these guidelines.

The RCMC

Magdalena Kitlowska

Tena Davies

Daria Rakhubovska

Khrystyna Zhyvaho

Reviewed and supported by the ISST TCAB in Dec 13, 2022 meeting

Approved by the ISST Executive Board on Dec 20th, 2022.