# Understanding Personality Disorders: Facilitator Pack

THE TALKING THERAPIES UK FACILITATOR PACKS



# Understanding Personality Disorders: Facilitator Pack

Teaching the course to a group

A facilitator pack · 3 sessions · for trainers

**TALKING THERAPIES UK**

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First edition, 2026.

This pack accompanies the course “Understanding Personality Disorders” on Talking Therapies UK Training & CPD and its course book. It is drawn from the course and is kept current with it: whenever the course changes, the pack is set again.

Revision 2. This printing was set on 3 November 2026 from the course as it stood that day.

A note on teaching from this pack. It supports qualified trainers and supervisors teaching within their competence. Running the course from it does not award the course’s CPD certificate, which participants gain by completing the course online.

Set in Poppins and Roboto, the Talking Therapies UK typefaces.

# Contents

**How to use this pack** 1

**Part 1 Planning the course** 3

1. About Understanding Personality Disorders 4
2. Planning the sessions 5

# How to use this pack

This pack is for trainers and supervisors who teach the Talking Therapies UK course “Understanding Personality Disorders” to a group: a session for each of its 3 modules, with timed plans, the points to draw out, group activities and discussion questions, the course’s assessment with answers, an attendance register and an evaluation form.

Part 1 sets out the course and how to plan it. Part 2 has a timed plan for each session, built from the course’s own modules, lessons and practice tasks; read it with the module it teaches. Part 3 holds the course’s assessment with its answers, an attendance register and an evaluation form.

### What this pack covers

- Plan the course as 3 sessions
- Follow a timed plan for each session
- Draw out each lesson’s key points
- Run each lesson’s practice task as a group activity
- Check understanding with the course’s own questions
- Keep a register and gather evaluations

PART 1

# Planning the course

*What the course covers, who it is for, and how to run it.*

CHAPTER 1

# About Understanding Personality Disorders

Grounded in the principles of the Definitive British Textbook of Personality Disorders, this foundational course offers trainees and practitioners a comprehensive, humane, and evidence-based overview of personality pathology. We move beyond historical misconceptions to explore the biological and psychological underpinnings of personality, examining how temperament, early attachment experiences, and adversity shape neurobiological development. You will investigate the interplay between genetic predisposition and environmental stressors, gaining insight into why some individuals develop significant difficulties in emotional regulation and interpersonal functioning. The curriculum critically addresses the stigma that has historically surrounded these conditions, replacing judgment with a nuanced understanding of human complexity. Central to this module is the transition from outdated categorical typologies to the modern ICD-11 dimensional model. Learners will master the grammar of this new system, specifically focusing on trait domains and severity ratings, including the complex borderline pattern. By dismantling the myth that personality disorders are untreatable, this course demonstrates that a compassionate, dimensional framework is the essential prerequisite for effective assessment and intervention. Designed for those with no prior experience, it provides the necessary theoretical grounding to progress confidently into clinical assessment and treatment pathways.

### By the end of the course, participants will be able to

- Describe what personality disorder is and is not, and the harm loose usage does
- Explain the shift from categorical types to the severity-and-trait model in ICD-11
- Recognise the common presentations, including emotionally unstable and avoidant patterns, without caricature
- Explain aetiology evenhandedly: temperament, attachment, adversity and their interaction
- Challenge stigma, including your own service's, with evidence and language
- Describe the evidenced treatment approaches and what they share

### Who it is for

The course is pitched at practitioners and trainees meeting the subject for the first time, and colleagues in allied roles who want a grounding in it.

### At a glance

- 3 sessions of about 120 minutes, one for each of the course's modules.
- The online course is accredited for 6 hours of CPD.
- Each participant needs the course book, or access to the online course, for reading between sessions.

CHAPTER 2

# Planning the sessions

Run one session for each module, a week or a fortnight apart, so that participants can read the module and try its practice task between sessions. The sessions can also be run as a block over two or three days.

OVERVIEW

## The course at a glance

| Session | Module | Lessons | Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | History, stigma and the case for change | 3 | 120 minutes |
| 2 | The science of personality pathology | 3 | 120 minutes |
| 3 | The ICD-11 dimensional model | 3 | 120 minutes |

### The group

- Six to sixteen participants: enough for small-group work, few enough for everyone to contribute.
- Agree ground rules at the first session: confidentiality, respect for different experience, and how participants will speak about their own clients (with nothing that could identify them).
- Ask before the course about access needs, and send any reading a week ahead.

### What you need

- A copy of this pack, and the course book or the online course for each participant.
- A flipchart or whiteboard, and space for groups of three or four to work.
- Printed copies of the attendance register and the evaluation form in Part 3, which you may copy for the groups you run.

### Keeping it safe

Training about psychological difficulties can bring up participants' own experience. Say at the start that anyone may step out, have someone available to talk to afterwards, and know where to point a participant who is struggling: their GP, their own supervisor or employee assistance programme, or Samaritans on 116 123.