A Framework of Competencies for Emotion-Focused Therapy Training

Empowering **EFT@EU**

Empowering Emotion-Focused
Therapy practice in Europe

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Note: If you wish to reference this document, you should use the following:

A Framework of Competencies for EFT Training

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This Trainer Framework corresponds to Intellectual Output 1 (IO1) for the EmpoweringEFT@EU project (Erasmus+ Project reference: 2020-1-PT01-KA202-078724; website: emotionfocusedtherapy.eu). IO1 establishes the present framework of competencies for training in the modality of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), designated as the EFT Trainer Competency Framework (henceforth, EFT Trainer Framework). Trainer competencies involve knowing how to train therapists in the modality of EFT, by effectively communicating theoretical, clinical principles and relevant research on EFT to therapists hoping to learn and practise this modality. It also includes organising and creating opportunities for experiential exercises and skills practise during training and for establishing learning environments (e.g. in terms of supervision and skills assessment) and supporting local networks for disseminating EFT practice and facilitating growth of trainees in terms of their therapist competencies. For these reasons, this document is interrelated with the Therapist Competencies for Emotion-Focused Therapy Practice (i.e., EFT Therapist Competency Framework) and with the Supervisor Competencies for Emotion- Focused Therapy Practice (i.e., EFT Supervisor Competency Framework - IO2), also developed within the EmpoweringEFT@EU project.

In this document we begin by briefly contextualising EFT training (in terms of the contexts for training/learning EFT – section 0, below), focus on the general characteristics recognised in EFT Trainers and requirements for becoming a certified EFT Trainer according to the isEFT –

International Society for Emotion-Focused Therapy (website: iseft.org; section 1) and then address the main aspects of training in this modality: Didactic training (section 2); Organizing and facilitating experiential exercises/skills practice (section 3); Assessment in EFT Training (section 4) and Informal Network Meetings (section 5). We refer readers to relevant references regarding EFT training (section 6) and also acknowledge the many contributions from Expert EFT Trainers (Acknowledgments, below) regarding this document. Finally, we present an overview of a workshop for Training EFT Trainers (Appendix 1) as an opportunity to pilot the implementation and development of these competencies.

Section 0. Situating EFT Training

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EFT training takes place in many different contexts, ranging from EFT institutes to academic, professional or even research settings. It is characterised by a set of general features or principles, and is carried out using a range of modalities, and in a variety of contexts. Within these different contexts, EFT training unfolds for a given individual over a series of recognised stages. In addition, we suggest that EFT training is most effective when it takes place in humanistic learning environments characterised by several important features (e.g., safety, competence).

0.1. What are the key general features/principles of EFT training?

1. Knowing: Didactic coverage of EFT theory and principles of practice.

2. Showing: Recording-based exemplification of practice ("Don't just tell; show!") and/or live-demonstrations.

3. Doing/Experiencing: Skill practice in client and therapist roles using real, personal issues.

4. Growing: Personal and professional development, namely, personal work in the client role as well as experience as a therapist providing EFT; may involve working to overcome blocks to practice, reflecting and integrating previous learnings across a range of inputs.

Also:

5. Multi-faceted/comprehensive: Training is characterised by an integrated diversity of modalities/learning opportunities.

6. Responsive to the context and participants of particular trainings: e.g., training being led in a student-centred manner fostering person-centred training environments.

0.2. What modalities are used in EFT training?

Workshops: More typically organised into levels of progressive proficiency in EFT (but also can take the form of courses or masterclasses) consisting in combinations of the following elements: (a) didactic presentations; (b) examples/videos; (c) experiential exercises/skill practice; (d) opportunities for group discussion/self- reflection/ integration of learning.

7. Readings/self-study: These include both key sources and new developments.

8. Practice/supervision: These also include feedback/certification.

9. Personal work as needed: This can increase resilience, address blocks to practice.

10. Research: This may involve being a researcher, rater or therapist in a research study, especially process research based on an intensive analysis of sessions (ideally recorded, but also transcripts, with observer-rated measures).

11. Informal network meetings:These are local, free or low-cost; e.g., book study groups, peer- supervision/intervision, peer skill practice (see section 4).

12. Conferences and formal presentations: These can include ISEFT conferences or other conference presentations (e.g., on EFT theory, practice or research).

0.3. In what contexts does EFT training take place?

1. Continuing professional education: For previously trained therapists; e.g., levels trainings, masterclasses.

2. Integrated EFT training top-up courses: Beyond an initial psychotherapy training but with an organised, coherent, sequential programme.

3. EFT-based complete psychotherapy training courses: First trainings in psychotherapy, with or without a background in psychology, including training in general practice issues, e.g., ethics.

4. University-based classes: These occur within a broader curriculum (e.g., counselling or clinical psychology); this can raise implications/ethical issues regarding the use of experiential work.

0.4. What forms does EFT training take? (The Pathway)

1. Taster/introductory lectures/workshop experiences (1 hour to full day).

2. Foundational training: e.g., isEFT Levels Workshop model (or equivalent): Level 1: overview of EFT theory and practice (4 days); Level 2: Broader, more in-depth coverage (greater depth on chair tasks; other tasks; case formulation; 4 to 9 days, depending on model of the levels training, e.g., Toronto vs. Glasgow); Masterclasses on specialised topics. Or: University model: embedded in classes over time (about 50 hours)

3. Therapeutic practice and group/individual supervision.

4. Accomplishment of the accreditation process as an EFT therapist (e.g., evaluation of submitted recordings).

5. Ongoing personal/professional development as an EFT therapist (post- accreditation).

6. Training and accreditation as an EFT supervisor/facilitator for workshop trainings.

7. Training and recognition as an EFT trainer (local/institute-based; international).

0.5. How do you create productive, humanistic EFT learning environments/communities? (General Requirements)

1. By promoting safety/trust/integrity.

2. By setting good boundaries.

3. By providing adequate resources (space, administrative, promotion, equipment, curriculum).

4. By creating a competent/harmonious training team.

5. By fostering mutual engagement/involvement by both participants & trainers.

6. By holding a supportive structure characterised by regularity, predictability, organisational scaffolding, infrastructure, continuity, and professionalism.

7. By providing a humanistic learning environment in which participants feel free to expose their vulnerabilities and open themselves to learning new skills and ways of relating to their own emotions and those of others.

8. By providing opportunities for (new) members to grow in terms of engagement, responsibility and autonomy.

Section 1. General Characteristics of EFT Trainers

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In this section, we acknowledge different types of EFT Trainers, according to the isEFT and the contexts where they teach, their background and general skills.

1.1. What kinds of EFT Trainers are there?

1.1.1. Main types of EFT trainers:

International EFT Trainers: Appointed by the isEFT; usually train across various contexts and countries, particularly by providing isEFT recognized training that can lead to accreditation.

Institute-based Trainers: Nominated or appointed by local institutes, with approval of isEFT; can run isEFT recognized trainings in their institutes.

Trainers-in-training: EFT supervisors working toward being recognised by isEFT as Institute-based trainers.

Facilitators: EFT supervisors or supervisors-in-training who help with skill practice during trainings.

1.1.2. Ancillary trainers:

Shadowers: Not technically trainers; supervisors in training who observe trainers during skill practice; part of the training team; may also provide technical or language/translation support.

Supervisors: Technically, case-based learning trainers, but covered separately in the supervisors' competencies framework document.

Other Trainers who teach EFT: Outside isEFT framework, not formally recognised by isEFT, may be university-based trainers, "EFT-friendly trainers".

1.2. What general background is important for EFT trainers?

1.2.1.Extensive practice as an EFT therapist and supervisor: Ability to practice EFT at trainer level (e.g., on PCEPS-EFT).

1.2.2. Mastery of EFT theory and practice.

1.2.3. Broader knowledge of the field of psychotherapy: Includes theories of psychological functioning, psychopathology, broader psychotherapy provisions; various theoretical models.

1.2.4. Experience in graduate teaching and evaluation.

1.2.5. Optimally: Experience/knowledge of EFT research and of current theoretical and research developments in EFT and psychotherapy more broadly.

1.3. What general skills are needed to deliver EFT training effectively?

1.3.1. Ability to invite/welcome/intrigue participants.

1.3.2. Ability to instruct/communicate theory and practice with clarity and concision.

1.3.3. Ability to model/exemplify EFT in delivery of training.

1.3.4. Ability to entertain/engage/inspire/maintain interest (e.g., clips, jokes).

1.3.5. Ability to hold/support/encourage/empathise with participants.

1.3.6. Ability to be responsive/creative/flexible/culturally sensitive.

Section 2. Didactic training

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This section elaborates upon didactic training in EFT, in terms of content, delivery process, ways of fostering trainee's motivation and managing unproductive group dynamics that may appear in training situations.

2.1. Content

Trainers should be proficient in and able to deliver/teach in-depth, nuanced theoretical content in the following areas:

2.1.1. Psychological suffering as understood in psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy: This may include the current understanding of psychopathology (theories, classifications), personality theories or psychological functioning with clinical applications, and emotion functioning.

1.1.2. The field of psychotherapy: This includes knowledge of EFT in the context of the overall field (other theoretical models such as psychodynamic, CBT– Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy, systematic, etc., knowledge of efficacy and effectiveness of psychotherapy and EFT in particular).

1.1.3. Humanistic-experiential therapies/theories: e.g., client-centred, Gestalt, focusing-oriented psychotherapy, existential psychotherapy; also, knowledge of historical and current developments, knowledge of the origins of EFT, etc.

1.1.4. Theory of EFT: theory of dysfunction, theory of psychological functioning, theory of emotion schemes, theory of change (sequential emotional processing, emotion scheme restructuring) – as described in the Therapist Foundational Competencies document (section 2.1.1).

1.1.5. Clinically applicable theory (useful heuristics): Clinically useful classification of emotions (e.g., four dimensions of emotions, emotion response types, emotional productivity, emotional arousal, vocal quality, etc.), theory of sequential emotional processing, symptom level work and underlying vulnerability work – fitting primarily EFT Therapist Competency Framework (section 2.1.1 in that document).

2.1.6. Overview of the provision of EFT

2.1.6.1. Perceptual/conceptual skills: Clinical application of emotion classification, dysfunction, theory of change, case conceptualization/formulation, perceptual/conceptual skills related to empathic exploration and transformational work including task application (see primarily section 2 of EFT Therapist Competency Framework).

2.1.6.2. Relational skills: Alliance building and relational rupture processing, real corrective relational experience (compassionate and validating), broadening of the client's interpersonal emotional awareness (section 1 of EFT Therapist Competency Framework).

2.1.6.3. Intervention skills: Empathy and experiential exploration skills, task related skills (see also perceptual/conceptual skills); this includes the overall task process and micro-level aspects of task processes (e.g., steps within tasks and goals within different steps of the tasks [e.g., enactment of the problematic aspects of the self/other, differentiation of core pain, articulation of unmet needs, probing for compassion, building protective anger, facilitating grieving, working with impasses, etc.], main (transformational) and other tasks, symptom-level and underlying vulnerability work (section 3 of EFT Therapist Competency Framework).

2.1.7. EFT Case formulation/conceptualization: This dimension ties all previous aspects together.

2.2. Delivery

The trainer should be proficient in the content delivery by demonstrating the following competencies/abilities:

2.2.1. Ability to be Flexible and Responsive:

2.2.1.1. Ability to adjust the overall delivery of the training depending on context and relevant learning outcomes (e.g., the learning outcomes differ depending on whether it is a complete EFT training, integrated top-up EFT training for existing mental health professionals, university-based training as a part of broader professional training [counselling/clinical psychology], or continuing professional education workshops).

2.2.1.1. Ability to continuously assess trainee's engagement, attitudes, knowledge and skills in the interaction with the presented material/content.

2.2.1.2. Ability to adjust the presentation (taught material/content) according to trainee's background (trainees theoretical background, the level of experience, the type of questions that are in the zone of proximal development – ZPD) and expected learning outcomes (e.g., to learn basic facts about EFT or to learn EFT to the certification standard).

2.2.2. Ability to be Systematic, Comprehensive and Coherent:

2.2.2.1. Ability to present systematically from the broad outline to a more nuanced content/material.

2.2.2.2. Ability to connect the presented material by showing its place in the overall content and its clinical application (e.g., explaining where emotion response types are in the overall EFT theory [a clinically useful classification of emotions], how they show in the various aspects of theory, illustrating an example of its application in the therapeutic process [theoretical, supported by video, supported by the practice, reflected back on, with the task for homework, clinical practice and supervision]).

2.2.3. Ability to Support Consolidation of Learning:

2.2.3.1. Ability to help trainee's consolidate their learning by a regular repetition of the taught concepts and engagement with these concepts through various means (lecture, video, discussion, practice, feedback, reflection).

2.2.3.2. Ability to explain concepts from various perspectives and in various ways in order to encourage engagement of trainees with the material, thus contributing to solidifying knowledge and its applications.

2.2.3.3. Ability to regularly summarise the taught material, while checking the level of understanding and knowledge among trainees.

2.2.3.4. Ability to maintain a loop between conceptual, didactic content; perceptual exercises; and complex experiential exercises that stimulate practical learning and further engagement with the taught content.

2.2.4. Ability to Exemplify Teaching/Learning:

2.2.4.1. Ability to embed the taught content in experiential/clinical practice.

2.2.4.2. Ability to appropriately use illustrative examples that show practical application of taught content.

2.2.4.3. Ability to skillfully model the application of practical material (primarily in vivo, in experiential break out groups, but also through videos and in-lecture examples).

2.2.5. Ability to foster Trainees' Self-Agency:

2.2.5.1. Ability to facilitate discussion and thus stimulate trainees' engagement with the material (e.g., engaging trainees in asking questions, in trying to offer therapist responses, in articulating opinions, etc.).

2.2.5.2.   Ability to gradually empower the trainees to present their conceptual/perceptual understandings and relational and intervention skills in the class/training

context (in addition to experiential/clinical work and supervision) with a provision of feedback and reflection that further stimulates cyclical engagement with the taught material.

2.2.5.3. Ability to prepare the appropriate tasks for trainees to carry out in order to support their engagement with didactic teaching (e.g., homework for further reading, watching videos, clinical practice and supervision).

2.3. Fostering trainee motivation

The trainer is proficient in engaging trainees in the didactic part of the training by demonstrating the following competencies/abilities:

2.3.1. Ability to assess motivation of the trainees for the training and during the training.

2.3.2. Ability to understand the professional context of the training (why trainees attend) and its potential impact on the motivation for learning.

2.3.3. Ability to change the rhythm of the training to maintain momentum/flow, or conversely to change pace in order to increase trainee motivation and engagement when it appears to be falling.

2.3.4. Ability to keep the training diverse and engaging/entertaining (mixing lecture, experiential work, videos, discussion, reflections).

2.3.5. Ability to embed the didactic training in the other parts of the training in order to foster engagement throughout the training (experiential exercises, supervision, clinical practice).

2.3.6. Ability to facilitate trainee-centred provision in order to build motivation and engagement (e.g., engaging trainees where they are – inviting them to set the learning goals for the training, questions they may have).

2.4. Managing the trainee group dynamic and the trainees – trainer dynamic

The trainer is proficient in facilitating the trainee group dynamic so it will be conducive to trainees' learning. This includes demonstrating the following competencies/abilities:

2.4.1. Ability to consider the context of the training and its impact on the group dynamic. (Note: this dynamic will be different in various contexts, e.g., the complete EFT training, integrated top-up EFT training for existing mental health professionals, university-based training as a part of broader professional training [counselling/clinical

psychology], continuing professional education workshops).

2.4.2. Ability to assess the trainee involvement/engagement in the context of the group dynamic and adequately respond to any difficulties that may arise.

2.4.3. Ability to adjust the presentation and related activities to trainees at varying levels (of knowledge, skills) can be engaged, while being cognisant of the trainees' dynamic.

2.4.4. Ability to involve all trainees in their learning (e.g., by making sure that trainees get a space – e.g., dominant vs. less dominant trainees; by offering activities that can help less dominant members to become active)

2.4.5. Ability to adjust the training flow in response to the developments in the trainees' group dynamic (e.g., working with break out groups to keep people active, considering reshuffling break out groups if the process does not go well in some of the groups).

2.4.6. Ability to process alliance ruptures with trainees and between trainees: This includes trying to understand the difficulty, showing the willingness to address it, being aware that addressing one rupture may be causing another with other trainee(s), making a call on whether to address the rupture directly or not, acknowledging if something cannot be accommodated, etc.

2.4.7. Ability to be culturally sensitive in various training contexts. Managing differences, sensitivities in the training group (e.g., in terms of privilege, gender, sexual orientation, minority status, etc.)

2.4.8. Ability to consider and adapt to the needs of trainees with disabilities or individual needs, while being cognisant of the group dynamic.

2.4.9. Ability to hold boundaries around the training and the group/trainer-trainees dynamic (including uphold ethical and professional responsibilities).

2.4.10. Ability to attend to the duty of care to individual trainees in the aftermath of experiential exercises that may have been impacted by the group dynamic.

Section 3. Organising and Facilitating Experiential Exercises/Skills Practice

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This section elaborates upon the organisation and development of experiential exercises and skill practice, as an important part of EFT training, complementing the didactic part. It provides an overview and background for different experiential exercises, formats, and a taxonomy of EFT experiential exercises. It also elaborates upon the appropriate conditions to facilitate a productive environment for skills practice (e.g. setting up instructions, promoting a safe environment among trainees, among other aspects).

3.1. Background and Overview of different experiential exercises

3.1.1.Dimensions of EFT Experiential Exercises.

In EFT training, experiential exercises can be situated on a two-dimensional map:

3.1.2. "Being" vs "Doing". The first dimension refers to the degree of therapist emphasis on "being" (relational presence) vs. "doing" (e.g. tasks). Exercises related to promoting relational skills, alliance, presence, or empathy are closer to the pole of being, while exercises that seek to promote skills to facilitate tasks are closer to the pole of doing; although obviously both aspects – being and doing – intertwine in all exercises.

3.1.3. Structure. Second, some exercises are more focused or closed (seeking to promote a specific skill or task facilitation), while other exercises are more open (e.g., open-marker), promoting more therapist autonomy and agency, closer to actual sessions with real clients).

3.2. Exercise formats

In addition, there are different formats in which experiential exercises take place: e.g., small groups (face-to-face or online), which typically take place in Levels 1 and 2 (also known as "real-playing"); however, there are also other formats (self-help exercises for therapists-in-training, homework for the therapists-in-training, role-playing, deliberate practice). Experiential exercise formats are usually informed by different training contexts (workshops, university context, masterclass, etc.).

3.3. A Taxonomy of EFT Experiential Exercises

Experiential exercises can classified as follows:

3.3.1. Personal Development exercises:

These are related to promoting growth and development for the therapist-in-training. They include exercises such as:

3.3.1.1. Self-awareness exercises: The goal of these exercises is for the trainee to be in contact with their emotional experiences as a therapist, as they face the client/hear the client's narrative in the moment. The therapist needs to be able to differentiate which of their immediate experiences are about the client's process and which are about their own processes. Examples can be found in the deliberate practice exercises, "Therapist self-awareness" and "Staying in contact in the phase of Intense Affect", in Goldman, Vaz & Rousmaniere, 2021 (exercises, 1 and 9). All the exercises listed in this section contain a self- awareness dimension, but there are exercises specifically intended to develop the therapist's self-awareness, and to foster this important therapeutic competence (see EFT Therapist Competency Framework, section 2.1.2).

3.3.1.2. Self-knowledge and exploration exercises: The goal of these exercises is to enhance the trainee's own emotional processing style (e.g., exercises from emotioncompass.org).

3.3.1.3. Personal growth exercises: These exercises are aimed at facilitating experience in the client role and of own therapy.

3.3.1.4. Therapist's blocks exercises: The goal of these exercises is to work with the therapist's blocks in working with clients (Dolhanty, 2022; Lafrance et al., 2020).

3.3.1.5. Empathy exercises: These exercises focus on opening up empathic capacity (e.g., Empathy Channels exercise; Elliott & Carrick, 2019).

3.3.2. Therapeutic Presence exercises:

These are aimed at building capacity for optimal therapeutic presence with clients. They include exercises such as:

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3.3.2.1. General presence exercises: The goal of these exercises is cultivating presence more broadly in the trainees' own life and before sessions (e.g., Geller & Greenberg, 2012).

3.3.2.2. Self-Disclosure exercises (e.g., Goldman et al., 2021, exercise 10).

3.3.3. Therapeutic alliance building exercises:

These involve promoting the therapeutic alliance. They include:

3.3.3.1. Exercises for providing treatment rationale or co-construction of a therapeutic focus (e.g., Goldman & Greenberg, 2015).

3.3.3.2. Alliance Repair exercises: These involve training therapists to recognize and address problems the develop in the therapeutic alliance (e.g., Elliott & McDonald, 2021).

3.3.4. Empathy Exercises:

These are aimed at promoting therapist empathic attitudes and skills. They include:

3.3.4.1. Body metaphors for empathy (Elliott & Greenberg, 2021, p. 53).

3.3.4.2. Opening Channels of receptivity (Elliott & Carrick , 2019).

3.3.4.3. Exercises in emotional deepening.

3.3.4.4. Exercises on use of imagination in empathic listening.

3.3.4.5. Exercises in EFT empathic response modes (focused or open): feeling reflection, empathic affirmation, evocative reflection, empathic conjecture, exploratory reflection, empathic refocusing (e.g. Goldman, Vaz & Rousmaniere, 2021, exercises 2, 3, 6, 7 & 8) exercises to deliver empathic validation of needs vs. confrontation (e.g. Greenberg, 2021, p. 137; Elliott, 2017).

3.3.5. Task facilitation exercises:

These promote practice in specific EFT tasks, including:

3.3.5.1. Two-chair dialogues for conflict splits (e.g., self-criticism, self- interruption, self coercion, depressive, anxiety/worry, motivational).

3.3.5.2. Empty Chair dialogue for UFB (unfinished business).

3.3.5.3. Focusing for unclear felt sense.

3.3.5.4. Empathic affirmation for vulnerability.

3.3.5.5. Self-compassion (e.g., compassionate self-soothing chair work).

3.3.5.6. Clearing a Space for attention difficulties.

3.3.5.7. Systematic Evocative Unfolding for problematic reaction points.

3.3.5.8. Meaning Creation for meaning protests.

3.4. Ability to Consider Resources needed for Experiential Exercises

Among the several logistic, human and structural resources and principles needed to create the proper conditions for experiential exercises or skills practice, we highlight that trainers need:

3.4.1. Ability to adapt the exercises to the context of training/ experiential work.

3.4.2. Ability to assess needed facilities and resources for the breakout rooms (in presence or online): facilitators, chairs, privacy of the rooms, presence of tissues.

3.4.3. Ability to consider the number of facilitators needed (trainee-facilitator ratio) and their previous training in order to provide adequate support for the exercises.

3.4.4. Ability to assess an optimal group size conducive to specific length and kinds of trainings and exercises.

3.4.5. Ability to structure and manage the training time-schedule, giving enough resources for each phase of the experiential exercises (i.e., instructions, starting the exercise, closing, debriefing, and discussing in a large group format).

3.5. Ability to promote a collaborative and safe environment for experiential/skills work

One of the most important aspects for promoting a productive learning environment for experiential exercises or skill practice is establishing a collaborative and safe environment. For that, trainers need to demonstrate:

3.5.1. Ability to create a sense of safety, so that groups can self-organise without a pressure to take on a particular role (e.g., client or therapist), but at the same time being monitoring and addressing the level of engagement (so participants remain active and focused).

3.5.2. Ability to assess the impact of dual relationships in small groups (e.g., boss/ employee, relative, friends, …).

3.6.3.Ability to consider and be aware of own potentially harmful dual relationships with trainees (e.g. as teacher, therapist, supervisor, mentor, facilitator or trainer)

3.6.4.Ability to motivate trainees to work with their own emotional processes.

3.6.5. Ability to foster self-agency and a sense of safety among trainees.

3.6.6. Ability to explain and facilitate a general "culture of openness" inside small groups: e.g., fostering supportive and validating communication (sharing experiences

instead of giving critical feedback), respecting confidentiality and potentially vulnerable experiences that the experiential work may bring.

3.6.7. Ability to respond to trainee needs due to the nature of the personal work and vulnerabilities that may come up in individual trainees (duty of care).

3.7.8. Ability to facilitate members of small exercise groups to actively formulate their observations and learnings, facilitating safe and productive discussion.Ability to consider appropriate composition of small groups participants in terms of gender, culture, level of experience, etc., ensuring that dual relationships are minimised.

3.6. Ability to Provide Useful Clear Instructions Set up Experiential/skills Work

Another important aspect for promoting a productive learning environment for experiential exercises or skill practice is by providing clear and useful instructions. For that, trainers need to show:

3.6.1. Ability to explain the goals of particular exercises/activities.

3.6.2. Ability to provide a rationale for experiential work/skills practice (e.g., real-playing).

3.6.3. Ability to discuss and alleviate concerns trainees may have around experiential/skills work.

3.6.4. Ability to provide clear instructions for experiential/skills work, including the different roles involved in the exercise, etc.

3.6.5. Ability to link the didactic content to the experiential work.

3.6.6. Ability to be fully and engagingly present while delivering instructions (vocal quality, poignancy of the examples).

3.6.7. Ability to appropriately self-disclose to model trainees to share their own process.

3.6.8. Ability to facilitate, support, and educate co-facilitators and trainers-in-training.

3.7. Ability to Facilitate Experiential Work/Skills Practice

It is also important to show adequate facilitation during the development of experiential exercises or skill practice, as part of EFT training. For that, trainers/facilitators need to demonstrate:

> 3.7.1. **Ability to orient oneself** in the processes of trainees engaged in [LT6] experiential exercise.
>
> 3.7.1. **Ability to facilitate trainees' competencies** at a proximal development zone.
>
> 3.7.2. **Ability to assess the dynamic in small groups** between the trainees and in relation to the trainer, attend to and resolve any difficulties (e.g. ruptures, engagement, difficulties, etc.).
>
> 3.7.3. **Ability to facilitate the group process** when an interruptive process appears in the group.
>
> 3.7.4. **Ability to keep the right balance between supporting and leading**, providing feedback and modelling (e.g., when the trainee is missing a marker, when the task is blocked at a certain step, when the trainee is lacking skills, when the group has not seen a good process yet, etc.).
>
> 3.7.5. **Ability to differentiate between the didactic purpose of the exercise and the experiential/therapeutic process of the trainee/client**, deciding when to stick to the intended task and when to suggest new tasks/processes.
>
> 3.7.7. **Ability to facilitate debriefing in the small exercise groups:** offering feedback to the trainees in the therapist role and linking it to the didactic input.
>
> 3.7.8. **Ability to facilitate learning from the small exercise group to the large training group in the big group**, closing the loop by linking the experiential learning and process to the didactic content.

3.8. An Initial Perspective on Training Difficulties and Competencies for handling Them (a tentative outline)

We provide here a provisional classification of the difficulties that may be experienced between trainees and training staff:

3.8.1. **Confrontation difficulties:** e.g. trainees complain, criticise training, trainer or facilitators; show power struggles between trainees and training staff.

3.8.2. **Withdrawal difficulties:** e.g. talking instead of practising, cutting exercises short, not following instructions, retreating into superficiality.

3.8.3. Conflict among skill practice small group members:

3.8.3.1. Criticisms among small group members (e.g. harsh feedback between them)

3.8.3.2. Surrogate or other group member takes over from therapist without permission

3.8.4. Trainee personal process difficulties:

3.8.4.1. Trainee difficulties in the therapist role: e.g., freezes, therapist does not want to let go/end session/practice with client; receives feedback as criticism; feels deskilled by trainer/ facilitator; feels angry at trainer/facilitator for taking over too much.

3.8.4.2. Trainee difficulties in the client role: e.g., gets overwhelmed, then interrupts work or leaves the room; annoyed by discussions in the group about their process.

3.8.5. Trainer-related difficulties: e.g., Trainer feels vulnerable or exposed; experiences own personal process as neglecting to meet teaching objectives; struggles with time or safety boundaries (e.g. recording); trainees resent differences in praise received by others in their group.

3.8.6. Facilitator-related difficulties: e.g., Facilitators compete with trainer for attention; trainees feel angry with trainer but direct it out on the facilitator by criticising them.

3.8.7. Cultural difficulties: e.g., Gender issues, conflicts around cultural values emerge in skill practice (e.g., how feedback is given, deference to authority).

Section 4. Assessment in EFT Training

Section 4. Assessment in EFT Training

This section provides a global overview on assessment as a part of EFT training. It emphasises several aspects related to this topic, namely: the philosophy of assessment in EFT, domains, forms and contexts of assessment, and forms of assessment according to the competencies addressed in the EFT Therapist Competency Framework.

4.1. Global view on learning outcomes and assessment as a part of EFT training

In EFT training, assessment supports the overarching goal of co-creating a developmental path for trainees that enhances their qualities and skills as EFT therapists, and eventually provides evidence of their mastery in the competences for EFT practice (see EFT Therapist Competency Framework). Ideally, learning outcomes should be framed in terms of trainee/therapist competencies that should be met. Then, the final goal of summative assessment of training and supervision is to be checked against therapists' competences (see EFT Therapist Competency Framework and also EFT Supervisor Competency Framework).

4.2. Philosophy of assessment in EFT

The philosophy of and manner of assessment in EFT is based on/characterised by:

4.2.1. A neo-humanistic stance: i.e., assessment should always be embedded in a dialogue with the trainee perspective.

4.2.2. The trainer's sensitive but genuine assessment of the trainee's performance.

4.2.3. Is seen as an essential tool to promote trainee self-awareness and skills.

4.2.4. Is constrained by the limits imposed by the features of EFT and by its general guidelines of good clinical practice.

4.3. Ways of assessment

Assessment in EFT may include the following:

4.3.1. A continuum ranging between formal and informal assessment (see below, 4.2);

4.3.2. Formative assessment (what is good and what should be improved) and summative assessment (are the criteria/learning outcomes met or not).

4.4. Domains of assessment in EFT

Assessment in EFT entails different domains and focuses on aspects, such as:

4.4.1. Conceptual knowledge about specific aspects of EFT (e.g., the structure and sequence of steps of a therapeutic task);

4.4.2. Performance of the trainee in the therapist role (e.g., posture, tone of voice, responsiveness to the needs of the client); and

4.4.3. The here-and-now presence of the therapist, as indicated by verbal and non-verbal observable signs.

4.5. Trainer competencies and sensitivity to assessment in distinct training contexts.

It is important to adapt EFT assessment to different contexts (see different contexts of training in 0.3, above). The trainer should be proficient in the following:

4.5.1. Ability to adapt the assessment procedures in response to a range of contexts, including:

4.5.1.1. Level of training: For example, the questions and assignments must be relevant to the training – e.g., simple, straightforward questions (e.g. T/F questions) to initial learners.

4.5.1.2 Purposes of training: For example, the learning outcomes of an introductory lecture may be assessed with methods more focused on conceptual questions (e.g., a quiz, a writing assignment), while more in-depth skills training will benefit from assessment of skills practice.

4.5.1.3. Context of the training: Academic settings, such as universities, may require more elaborated reasoning on theoretical and empirical issues, while professional settings may be more focused on therapeutic practice.

4.5.1.4. Training requirements: i.e. Certification for isEFT vs. individual training, continuing professional development credits

4.5.1. Ability to balance between facilitating vs. assessing: The trainer should be able to deal with the delicate equilibrium between facilitating (i.e. motivating the trainee's learning) versus assessing (i.e.giving accurate feedback about the learning process, both formative and, eventually, summative).

4.5.2. Ability to use formative assessment as a learning tool: The trainer should be able to use formative assessment procedures as a way to foster learning (formative assessment), creatively adapting them.

4.5.2.1. The trainer should be able to perform an expert summative assessment of the trainees' competences or skill level:

4.5.2.2. as a formal assessment during a supervision context (e.g. when supervisees submit sessions/case formulations) for accreditation as an EFT therapist or supervisor (see Supervision framework, section 10);

4.5.2.3. as a formal assessment during a course on EFT in a university context or with an institute with a graduation requirement.

4.5.3. Ability to adjust learning outcomes for specific training contexts/purposes: Trainers should be familiar and have an expert knowledge on the learning outcomes to be assessed and be able to adjust them appropriately for each specific training. (see therapists' competencies listed in the also EFT Supervisor Competency Framework Part B, section 1 to 3 ; namely: Relational competences; Perceptual and conceptual knowledge; Intervention skills).

4.6. Trainer competencies and sensitivity to assessment in different trainee/therapist skills

4.6.1. Ability to assess trainees' conceptual knowledge and perceptual skills: Trainers should be have an expert knowledge in and ability to put forward forms of assessment that are (in)formative for the trainee about the development of their conceptual understanding of EFT theory and EFT perceptual skills, and application to real cases. This may entail several forms, depending on the context and goals, such as:

4.6.1.1. Multiple choice tests about concepts (e.g., emotion theory, markers, tasks) and practice guidelines (e.g., characterization of a specific task): usually more appropriate for objective contents (e.g., markers-tasks pairing, definitions of emotion theory concepts, etc.).

4.6.1.2. Open questions/short answer items about concepts or tasks: may vary between descriptive questions (e.g., asking the trainee to list and describe the different phases/stages of a task) or more reflective questions (in which the trainee may be challenged to elaborate about difficult topics or to bridge different concepts).

4.6.1.3. Assessment of perceptual skills: through questions based on the observation of videos or other types of demonstrations (see EFT Supervisor Competency Framework, Part B, for a list of the most relevant perceptual skills)

4.6.1.4. Reflective essays about specific topics.

4.6.1.5. Writing papers in a scientific format: e.g. in the form of a clinical formulation/ clinical case study.

4.6.2. Ability to assess trainees' clinical formulation skills:

Trainers should have an expert knowledge in and ability to assess the trainees' clinical formulation skills (see EFT Supervisor Competency Framework, Part B). The following may be used:

4.6.2.1. Application of EFT clinical formulation models: The assessment may involve the application of a specific EFT model of clinical formulation to a particular client or video and receiving feedback about the formulation from the trainer.

4.6.2.2. This can be performed in group or in individual training/supervision contexts.

4.6.2.3. This may be a core part of a written clinical formulation/clinical case study (see 3.1.2).

4.6.3. Ability to assess trainees' relational skills:

Trainers should have an expert knowledge of and ability to monitor, assess and give accurate/useful feedback regarding the trainees' relational skills involved in skill practice (see EFT Supervisor Competency Framework, Part B, section 1). Examples of modalities are listed below (and may happen in contexts of EFT training and EFT supervision):

4.6.3.1. Providing feedback to trainees during their performance of a skill practice or after small group practice.

4.6.3.2. Providing feedback to trainee(s) while reviewing a recording of a group skills practice or a recorded real session with a client.

4.6.3.3. Trainees record skill practice with a volunteer, review their practice in a written format, and receive subsequent feedback about their performance from the trainer.

(Note: Both trainer and trainee may use structured means to provide their feedback, such as EFT Therapist Session Form, EFT Therapist Response Modes framework or PCEPS-EFT, to conduct competency assessment.)

4.6.4. Ability to assess trainees' personal development:

In some specific contexts, it may be relevant for the trainer to support and assess personal development of the trainees. This may happen through assigning specific tasks to foster personal development and experiential knowledge about the therapy and through assessing/providing feedback on the reflection of trainees personal experiences and their relevance for EFT practice. A few examples include:

4.6.4.1. Written reflection on personal experiences of activities/ or EFT tasks, such as:

4.6.4.1.1. Focusing exercises;

4.6.4.1.2. Two-chair assignments in a written format;

4.6.4.1.3. Writing letters to significant others;

4.6.4.1.4. Maintaining an experientially based journal throughout EFT training.

4.6.5. Ability to use multimodal assessment:

Trainers should be proficient in combining different assessment domains, resulting in comprehensive and complex assessments. For example, assessment may combine different modalities to assess learning outcomes (relational, conceptual-perceptual, or intervention skills, see Training Manual for EFT Supervisors, Part B, section 1 to 3), such as:

4.6.5.1. Assignment of a learning log, in which trainees are asked to describe, synthesise and reflect the main concepts learnt;

4.6.5.2. Assignments examining application of EFT concepts and practices to daily personal experiences;

4.6.5.3. Writing of an in-depth clinical case report or a full case study.

4.6.6. Ability to assess in a respectful way, when it concerns the personal experience of trainees:

When assessment methods involving trainee's personal experience are used (see 4.6.4. and 4.6.5., above), trainer assessment and feedback should be provided in a formative way, respecting the personal space of the trainee, and maintaining disclosure as voluntary.

Section 5. Informal Network Meetings

Section 5. Informal Network Meetings

In this section, we discuss EFT network meetings as informal training opportunities to foster local EFT communities. We elaborate upon several organisational, and pragmatic issues and show the Scottish EFT Institute Network Meetings as an example of this.

5.1. Overview

EFT Network Meetings are generally sponsored by a local EFT institute, to provide informal training opportunities used to support local EFT communities (although they can attract participants from elsewhere). They are often free or low-cost, and organised as online or in person events.

5.2. Formats/Timing

5.2.1. Medium: In person or online.

5.2.2. Length: 2 to 5 hours.

5.2.3. Frequency: Monthly to quarterly.

5.2.4. Scheduling: Weekends or evenings.

5.3. Useful elements for EFT Network Meetings:

5.3.1. Book study: Participants select a recent or classic EFT book and work their way through a series of meetings, discussing key points and how they can be applied.

5.3.2. Intervision/peer supervision

5.3.3. Watching EFT videos

5.3.4. Peer skill practice

5.3.5. Informal Networking (with or without food)

5.3.6. EFT News/Features

5.3.7. Formal presentations on elements of EFT practice or theory (a perennial favourite: case formulation)

5.4. Logistics

5.4.1. Space/Platform:

5.4.1.1. In person: homes, churches, other public meeting spaces.

5.4.1.2.Online: Zoom is recommended but other useful platforms may exist or be developed over time.

5.4.2. Membership:

5.4.2.1. Eligibility: Usually restricted to practising therapists who have completed at least EFT Level 1 or the equivalent.

5.4.2.2.Managing invitations: Some kind of system is needed for keeping track of membership and sending out announcements of upcoming meetings. With larger groups this can require significant time investment and the use of a listserv.

5.4.3. Resources needed:

5.4.3.1. Physical space or online platform (e.g., Zoom).

5.4.3.2. Money: to provide space/platform.

5.4.3.3. Time/energy to organise, promote and send out announcements.

5.5. Example: Scottish EFT Institute Network Meetings

5.5.1. Listserv: https://groups.google.com/g/eft-training?pli=1

5.5.2. URL: http://www.eft-scotland.org/?page_id=33

5.5.3. Sample announcements with timetable:

Winter 2022 SI-EFT Network meeting, Saturday 22 January 2022

Dear EFT Community:

We are pleased to announce the winter Winter 2022 Scottish EFT Network meeting, on Zoom.

If you are interested in attending this 4-hour session, please email Robert to request an invitation, which will be sent out the day before and at the time.

Date: Saturday, 22 January 2022

Time: 13.00 – 17.00 (UK time)

Special Features:

** APA Streaming Video: Laco Timulak: Emotion-Focused Therapy and Family Relational Issues" **

In this session, Laco demonstrates emotion-focused therapy with an African American male client who presents with concerns related to family dynamics and conflict with his partner. The therapist helps the client identify core emotions associated with this conflict; he also allows the client to examine how his partner's frequent verbal abuse toward him as a man and as a father triggers his self-doubt and fear about failing his daughter. Throughout the session, Laco uses the empty chair technique to help the client assume the perspectives of others in his life and to express core feelings and needs toward himself and his family members. The client also discusses his temporary physical disability, which has impacted his frustrations toward his sense of self and his role in the family. Through deep emotional exploration, validation, and support, Laco helps the client find self-compassion and begin to build a greater sense of empowerment and self-trust. (DOI: 10.1037/v00648-001; Date Recorded: 10/03/2018; Release Date: 2019/04/29)

Place: Zoom: Please email Robert to request an invitation Timetable/Approximate Timings:

13.00: Scottish EFT Institute update; followed by brief check-in/update on your practice in Zoom rooms (50 min)

13:55: Video (60 min)

15.00: Networking/social time: Have a cup of tea/coffee and a snack while you talk with others in the community; we will make break-out rooms available for those who prefer smaller conversations (30 min)

15.30: Skill practice or small group supervision (65 min)

16.35: Processing (30 min)

17.00: End

Upcoming Scottish EFT Institute Network Meetings

19 March 2022: Video: Les Greenberg, Session 4

14 May 2022: Video: Rhonda Goldman, Online EFT: Working with Self- criticism in Eating Difficulties

23 July 2022: Video: tba

17 Sept 2022: Video: tba

Scottish EFT Network Meetings are sponsored by the Scottish Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy (SI-EFT). They are open to everyone who has completed at least one level of EFT training and is interested in developing their EFT practice. They meet five or six times each year. You do not need to be based in Scotland or the UK in order to attend. They are currently free but small (£5-£10) donations are welcome (to defray SI-EFT expenses) via our website: http://www.eft-scotland.org/

-Robert, Lorna, Ligia, Joan & Richard (SI-EFT Board)

Section 6. References

Section 6. References

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Appendix 1: Training EFT Trainers

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Note: This outline was a preliminary draft for the pilot workshop that occurred in May 2022, in Dublin. The workshop – as actually delivered – ended up becoming a little different from what was outlined, based upon the experience, and needs of the trainees. More on this will be integrated in the upcoming EmpoweringEFT@EU intellectual outputs (namely, the Good Practice Guide for EFT Training – IO4).

Trainers: Robert Elliott & Ladislav Timulak (pilot workshop held in Dublin, 25-27 May, 2022)

A1.0. Elements of EFT Training the Trainers Programme

The proposed programme here is assumed here as one of the steps involved in the process of training the trainers. It usually involves:

Observation and processing of expert practice (shadowing & facilitation as part of training team) (=Preliminary training phase)

Didactic discussion of principles of good practice (Workshop phase)

Demonstrations/modelling + sharing of rationale/strategies

Supervision of Training (=Follow-on Phase 3): reviewing curricula/slides; reviewing exercises; exploring general strategy; exploring training difficulties; recording review/ live observation of training practice with feedback

A1.1. Three Phase Training Model

A1.1.1. Preliminary training: Shadowing, maybe some facilitation

Shadowing + processing: 4 – 12 days

 Facilitation: 4 – 12 days

A1.1.2. Training the Trainers Workshop (1- 3 days; programme outline)

-Preparatory Homework/Exercise: design a 30-60 min training experience of some aspect of EFT (theory or practice) including slides, readings, exercises => Robert draft

-Preparatory: Prerequisites; Required reading; Homework (curriculum design)

-Overview of trainer competencies (didactic, overview)

-Curriculum design (personal experience, discussion, didactic)

-Demonstration of training + sharing of rationale/strategy (showing/

-Curriculum design:

-Thinking about EFT curriculum design (didactic + discussion)

-Experiential Session on skill practice training, including giving feedback (together & in break outs)

-Day 3, 60 min: Discussion of assessment (formative & summative)

Experiential practice by participants

- Group Discussion: trainer secrets, conflicts, group dynamics, different levels of experience among trainees; difficult questions (90 min @ day)

- Training Delivery Practice & feedback

- Supervision of training demonstrations

Issues:

- Consistency with other EFT trainings

- "Borrowing" slides

A1.1.3. Follow-on Training the Trainer activities: Observation & Supervision of training

-Recording/Live observation of Practice training delivery + supervision

A1.2 Outline of training the trainers workshop (recommended outlines for different length training of training)

Basic Structure of days: divided into 4 X 90 min segments

Day 1

Session 1: Introduction & Overview:

• Introductions (background & attendee questions for workshop);

• EFT training overview & competency framework Session 2:

• EFT training demonstration 1 (topic: Emotion theory; Intro to Level 1, Laco's version; training snippets with commentary, followed by discussion).

• Curriculum Design in EFT Training (Robert; examples of EFT levels trainings, varying by context)

Session 3: EFT training demonstration 2 (topic: therapeutic task, Motivational Splits; Robert: didactic plus commentary & discussion). Presentation and discussion of setting up experiential exercises

Session 4: Trainee discussion of own psychotherapy trainings & EFT training experiences. Catch-up/Reflection/discussion of the day. Set up timetable for following days' training supervision sessions

Day 2

Session 1: Presentation of Training Practice homework 1 (2 X 45 min sessions): in one of three formats: (a) Demonstration/presentation/ discussion; (b) discussion/review of training materials (eg, slides) with a training supervisor; or (c) review video of recording of own teaching for supervision of training (Chair: Robert)

Session 2: Didactic training: Framework & issues: Review & discuss principles (Laco)

Session 3: Presentation of Training Practice homework 2 (2 X 45 min sessions): three formats as before (Chairs: Laco & Robert)

Session 4: Skill Practice Session: Leading Experiential exercises/skill practice trainers 1: Parallel groups for 2 Trainers in Trainings (Laco & Robert: Shadow & later give feedback by to designated trainer); group discussion after

Day 3

Session 1: Presentation of Training Practice homework 3 (2 x 45 min): Three possible formats as before (Chair: Robert)

Session 2: Skill Practice Session: Leading Experiential exercises/skill practice trainers 2: Parallel groups for 2 Trainers in Trainings (Laco & Robert: Shadow & later give feedback by to designated trainer); group discussion after

Session 3: Assessment; Therapist Competence Framework (discussion); PCEPS: watch recording & practice rating (Robert)

Session 4: Round-up Discussion: Training tips & secrets; reflections; discussion; where to go from here/follow-on activities

A1.3. Dealing with difficulties in training

A1.4. EFT Training Tips & Secrets

-If the participants are unhappy with the expert trainer, they are much more likely to take it out on the facilitators

-Humour is your secret weapon

-Trainer self-disclosure: The Trainer in trouble discloses on the double (from Jerry Goodman)

A1.5 EFT Training resources: examples of curricula (see the upcoming Good Practices Guide on EFT Training)

Emotion-Focused Therapy Training