

## Empathy & Empathic Attunement in EFT

After a review of the research on specific elements of the psychotherapy Norcross & Wampold (2011) noted that empathy is demonstrably effective in promoting change in psychotherapy. Empathy is recognized as a trans theoretical construct that contributes to positive outcomes across different therapeutic approaches (Watson, Steckley & McMullen, 2014). This 3-day workshop will provide participants with a solid grounding in the skills required to be maximally empathic with their clients, to work more effectively in emotion focused psychotherapy, and develop productive therapeutic alliances.

Participants will be trained in the skills of moment-by-moment attunement to clients's experience in the session to facilitate clients cognitive-affective processing in emotion-focused psychotherapy. Skills training will include a combination of brief lectures, video demonstrations, case discussions and supervised practice in experiential exercises. The workshop will begin with a discussion on the role of empathy in therapeutic practice. First an overview of empathic resonance drawing from recent developments in neuropsychological research will be presented and ways of facilitating clinicians' responsiveness discussed. Second empathic expression including the behavioral components of empathy, along with different response modes and markers for how to intervene differentially will be identified and demonstrated. Third the role of empathic attunement in the processing of overwhelming emotion, self-criticism, and emotional injuries from the past will be presented. Videotaped examples of ways of working empathically will be presented and discussed.

This training will provide therapists from a variety of clinical backgrounds with an opportunity to enhance their skills of empathic attunement in emotion-focused psychotherapy.

### Educational Objectives:

- Participants will gain a differentiated understanding of empathy
- Participants will understand empathic resonance in the findings in context of research findings in neuroscience

- Participants will identify ways to enhance their empathic resonance
- Participants will differentiate empathic response modes and the behavioral correlates of empathy
- Participants will learn to intervene differentially using empathic markers
- Participants will learn how to help clients process overwhelming emotion, self-criticism, and emotional injuries from the past

## About Jeanne Watson



Dr. Watson is Professor at OISE, the University of Toronto, Canada. A major exponent of humanistic-experiential psychotherapy, she has contributed to the development of emotion focused psychotherapy, the process experiential approach. Dr. Watson teaches in the Counselling and Clinical Psychology Program and is an active researcher investigating the process and outcome of psychotherapy. She has conducted and collaborated on clinical trials comparing emotion focused psychotherapy with client centered psychotherapy and cognitive behavioral psychotherapy in the treatment of depression. Her research into identifying processes of change has yielded a number of observer measures to rate therapists' expressed empathy as well as clients' affect regulation in session. She has co-authored and co-edited a total of 9 books and has written over 90 articles and chapters, and delivered over 100 presentations including workshops and invited addresses on the theory and practice of Emotion Focused Therapy with an emphasis on empathy, the working alliance, emotional expression, and emotion focused therapy in the treatment of depression and generalized anxiety. Dr. Watson received the "Outstanding Early Career Award" from the International Society for Psychotherapy Research in 2002 and was awarded the Distinguished Career Award in 2020. In 2013 she was appointed a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, Division 29 in recognition of her contributions to the discipline of psychology. She has a part-time practice in Toronto.