

## **Core Training with Johannes Kieding, LCSW**

*An ISTDP-based psychotherapy training tailored to the unique needs and goals of each therapist-in-training*

### **My Approach to Training**

My approach to training mirrors my approach to psychotherapy.

In psychotherapy, I begin by listening closely to what isn't working in your life so we can clarify your goals and envision what success would look like. Ideally, every session thereafter is laser-focused on helping you move toward that vision.

I apply the same principle to psychotherapy training. We begin with an initial one-hour session in which I listen carefully to what's going well in your practice, what's not, and where you hope to grow. From there, we shape the training around your specific vision, prior experience, and professional aspirations. Rather than follow a rigid curriculum, each session is responsive to your goals and the evolving learning needs that arise in our work together.

Just as successful psychotherapy doesn't aim to turn a patient into a clone of the therapist, successful training doesn't produce copies of the teacher. My goal is for you to emerge with your own voice and your own way of working.

### **About Me and My Teaching Lineage**

I trained with Marvin Skorman for 15 years, including over a decade of weekly audio-visual supervision—one of Davanloo's closest students throughout the 1980s. This training will reflect that lineage, offering a deep dive into the technical and relational nuances of the model as they arise in the supervisory experience and in teaching videos. In his later years of practice, Marvin strongly encouraged me to begin training others, and we co-facilitated several trainings together. He also reviewed recordings of my supervision work as part of our ongoing learning process.

Marvin had four years of Core Training with Dr. Habib Davanloo in the late 1980s and early 1990s. With Davanloo's encouragement, Marvin co-founded the

International Institute for Teaching and Research of ISTDP and served as its Treasurer and Director of Training. He went on to lead trainings in medical schools, hospitals, graduate programs, and counseling centers, and helped found the Rochester Institute for ISTDP.

I consider myself part of a non-institutional teaching lineage. On page 3 of *Unlocking the Unconscious* (1990), Davanloo wrote:

"I have worked out standard types of interventions adapted to each move on the patient's part. These interventions have often been reached intuitively, and it is then only in retrospect that I have been able to describe theoretically what I have been doing."

Marvin embodied this spirit—building on Davanloo's framework while honoring his own intuition and style. I aim to do the same, and I encourage you to do likewise.

More about me can be found at: [www.johanneskieding.com](http://www.johanneskieding.com)

## **Traditional Core Training Structure**

This format is ideal for therapists who want a comprehensive group learning experience with opportunities to learn not only from their own supervision but also by observing the supervision of others.

The training is organized into 6-month blocks. We meet once a month for a full day—typically 4 to 7 hours, depending on the number of trainees. Each trainee commits to one 6-month block at a time and can decide whether to continue afterward.

Cohorts consist of 3 to 6 trainees. New participants may join only at the start of a new block.

## ***Intimate Core Training***

In this format, only 2 trainees participate, and each monthly meeting is 3 hours in length. Each trainee still receives 45 minutes of individual supervision, but the shorter format and smaller group size allow for a more concentrated and

personalized learning environment. It's a great option for those with limited time or energy to dedicate to training but who still want a rich and focused learning experience.

### **Monthly Meeting Format:**

- Each trainee receives 45 minutes to present therapy video and receive individual supervision.
- Followed by 10 minutes of group discussion.
- Then we take a short bathroom break before the next person has their turn.
- After all trainees have presented, I will share a segment from my own work that responds to themes that have emerged in the group, followed by a 30-minute Q&A and discussion.

### **Pre-Training Lecture and First Meeting:**

- Prior to the first meeting, each trainee will receive access to a pre-recorded lecture covering the core phases and concepts of ISTDP.
- The first meeting of the training is then dedicated to bringing these concepts to life through video illustrations of my clinical work and facilitated discussion.

### **Subsequent Meetings:**

- During all subsequent meetings, the final hour is dedicated to me showcasing segments of my own work aimed at highlighting themes that emerged from the supervision sessions earlier in the day, followed by group discussion and Q&A.

### **Certification:**

- Trainees receive a certificate indicating hours completed and a narrative summary of what they learned, including relevant literature.
- Completion of fewer than three years (six 6-month blocks) is designated Level 1. Completion of three years or more is designated Level 2.

**Cost:**

- \$1500 USD per 6-month block, due before the first session of the block.
- This includes one-on-one supervision, observing colleagues receive supervision, viewing of my therapy videos, and ample time for discussion and Q&A. The length of each meeting depends on the cohort size. Each training day is one hour longer than the number of participants—for example, a cohort of 4 trainees will meet for 5 hours, and a cohort of 6 trainees will meet for 7 hours.

To express interest or join the waitlist, email me at:  
[johannes@acceleratedpsychotherapy.com](mailto:johannes@acceleratedpsychotherapy.com)

**Potential Learning Objectives That May Interest You**

The following is a partial list of points of learning that are common for my trainees. They tend to arise spontaneously in response to specific clinical contexts and needs of the trainee. They may or may not line up with your interests and priorities. These points of learning are just something to think about as you formulate your own unique curriculum:

- Understanding the metapsychology of ISTDP (PowerPoint overview provided)
- ISTDP-informed couples therapy (offered in a separate cohort)
- Dynamic case formulation: Why is the patient suffering, and how can that be communicated effectively?
- Psycho-diagnostic skills: Assessing ego-adaptive capacity, fragility, and intervention calibration
- Working within the graded format to build capacity
- Knowing when to prioritize corrective emotional experience over major unlocking
- Establishing and maintaining a collaborative therapeutic alliance

- Distinguishing feelings from defenses and anxiety
- Monitoring conscious will and therapeutic engagement in real time
- Recognizing transference enactments and stepping out of the patient's projections
- Attending to therapist defenses that interfere with emotional closeness
- Introducing and facilitating termination

## **Philosophy of Practice**

We are all works in progress—including therapists. Psychotherapy is fundamentally two imperfect people working out a relationship. For an hour each week, one person plays the role of therapist and the other of patient, both aiming to access the patient's inner resources for healing.

We all have moments of clarity, presence, and connection—and moments of defensiveness and disconnection. That's human. The hope is that there are enough moments of true connection, whether they come from the therapist, the patient, or both, to move the work forward.

Clarity and emotional resonance are essential. When a patient speaks, the therapist should be able to form a vivid inner picture of the patient's experience—as if they're dreaming the same dream. The reverse is true as well: the patient should be able to feel and understand the therapist's communications just as clearly.

## **About ISTDP**

Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) helps increase moments of clarity and connection. It also provides tools to repair those moments when they are lost.

ISTDP is an experiential, psychoanalytic therapy designed to facilitate rapid access to the unconscious. Research shows it is effective in treating depression, anxiety,

psychosomatic disorders, personality disorders, and other complex or treatment-resistant conditions.

Developed by Dr. Habib Davanloo in the 1960s and 70s, ISTDP is now practiced and taught around the world. Davanloo originally defined successful treatment as occurring within 40 hours of therapy, with no symptom return over five years.

Key techniques and principles from ISTDP can strengthen any therapeutic modality, and are readily teachable to clinicians across a wide range of approaches.