

Bi-Weekly Supervision Group for Therapists: Exploring Affect Relational Theory (A.R.T.)

Affect Relational Theory (A.R.T.) is a cutting-edge framework focusing on the foundational role of affects—biologically hardwired feeling states—in shaping human emotion, behavior, and relationships. Unlike traditional approaches that often concentrate on cognition or behavior alone, A.R.T. emphasizes the nine core affects as the primary drivers of emotional and relational dynamics. These affects—such as interest-excitement, enjoyment-joy, and shame-humiliation—are universal and innate, shaping how we respond to and engage with the world around us. By understanding how these affects operate within individuals and groups, A.R.T. provides a powerful tool for fostering emotional intelligence, resilience, and connection.

A.R.T. helps therapists and clients alike to identify and work through the often unconscious affective experiences that underlie emotional struggles and relational difficulties. It highlights the importance of recognizing how blocked or disrupted positive affects, like interest and enjoyment, are often inhibited by painful affects like shame or distress, leading to emotional disconnection and relational breakdowns. By integrating A.R.T. into therapeutic practice, clinicians can help clients develop a deeper

awareness of their affective experiences, create more authentic emotional connections, and facilitate lasting healing and personal growth.

A.R.T. integrates and expands upon the insights from polyvagal theory and recent neuroscience research by offering a more comprehensive framework for understanding the biological and relational roots of emotional experience. While polyvagal theory emphasizes the role of the autonomic nervous system in regulating safety and social engagement, A.R.T. takes this further by detailing how specific affects, such as shame, interest, and enjoyment, govern our emotional and relational lives. A.R.T. explains how disruptions in positive affect can trigger defensive states, often aligned with polyvagal responses, and provides a more nuanced way to address these disruptions in therapy. Additionally, A.R.T. adds depth to emotion-based practices like EFT (Emotion-Focused Therapy) by clarifying how universal affective experiences shape personal emotional narratives, creating a richer therapeutic approach to emotional healing and relational growth.

Significantly, A.R.T. provides clear guidelines for understanding and implementing interventions for individuals working through trauma, recognizing that trauma affects not only the psycho-neurological system but the affective system as well. Trauma always entails a combination of shame, fear, and distress—three of the most potent inhibitors of the positive affects of Interest-Excitement and Enjoyment-Joy. A.R.T. sheds light on how these negative affects disrupt one's capacity to engage with life, relationships, and healing. By offering a framework that addresses the impact of trauma on the affective system, A.R.T. equips therapists with the

tools to not only help clients process trauma but also to rekindle the positive affects that support resilience, connection, and emotional recovery. This integrative approach ensures that trauma work is holistic, targeting the underlying neurobiological mechanisms and the affective barriers to healing.

Current Offerings:

This supervision group is designed for therapists of all levels interested in enhancing their therapeutic skills through the lens of Affect Relational Theory (A.R.T.). Each week, we will explore how understanding and working with the nine core affects can deepen therapeutic interventions and improve relational dynamics between therapists and their clients. Participants will gain insight into how affects shape emotional responses and interpersonal interactions, using A.R.T. principles to enhance their practice and provide more effective client support.

Through case discussions, readings, and fishbowl demonstrations, this psychoeducational group offers a collaborative space to refine your skills in recognizing and working with affects. Whether you're just beginning your career or are an experienced clinician, this group will help you navigate complex emotional and relational terrain with greater clarity and confidence. Join us to explore how A.R.T. can transform your therapeutic work and create more meaningful, lasting change for your clients.

Time: Thursdays, 6:30 PM – 7:45 PM

Requirements to Start: A consultation with Dr. Scott is required prior to starting the group.

Location: Online via Zoom

Cost: \$90/session, with 3-month commitment

If interested, please contact me [here](#)