

Andrew Twardon, PhD

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ANDREW TWARDON is a clinical psychologist practicing in New York City. He is a graduate of Warsaw University, Psychology Department (M.A. Clinical Psychology, 1980) and the Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research. (Ph.D. Clinical Psychology, 1993) Dr Twardon specializes in assessment, diagnosis and psychotherapy of personality disorders, depression, anxiety, addictions, relational / marital and family problems. He offers training and supervision in individual and group psychotherapy to psychologists and psychiatrists as well as mentoring and coaching in psychological and interpersonal competence for individuals, teams and organizations. He has practiced Zen Buddhism since 1978, including formal koan study in the Sanbô Kyôdan tradition at the Zen Mountain Monastery where he also received Jukai and Dharma name Nyoun. Since 1981, Dr Twardon has been affiliated with several mental health and academic institutions in New York City, including the New School for Social Research, Cabrini Medical Center, New York City Department of Mental Health, St. Barnabas Hospital, HIP New York and St.Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital. He is the Director of the Center for Intensive Treatment of Personality Disorders at the Department of Psychiatry of St.Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital and an Adjunct Professor at the Department of Psychology, Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research in New York. He is a member of the International Society for the Study of Personality Disorders and the founder of Twardon Group (www.twardon.org) - a study group dedicated to the research of psychotherapy, Buddhist meditation and personality disorders.

Integrating Buddhist Meditation with the Treatment of Personality Disorders

The lecture will present some of the applications of Buddhism and Buddhist meditation in the intensive treatment of severe personality disorders. First, we will review the new, post-DSM-IV-R, dimensional approaches to personality disorders and their treatment and clarify some of the key terms and concepts – identity, Self, personality, character, temperament, personality disorder, treatment.

Then, we will explore how some Buddhist meditative techniques, including Zazen, mindfulness, concentration and emptiness training, koan and sutra study, embedded in the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, can be effectively integrated with psychotherapy of personality, the Self and their disorders. Examples of actual implementation at the Center for Intensive Treatment of Personality Disorders in New York, along with some of the challenges and risk factors will be discussed. We will end with a brief experiential demonstration illustrating the main topic of the lecture.

The lecture will address advanced and technical aspects of clinical theory and practice - familiarity with personality disorders and the Buddhist path will be expected.