

CENTRUM ISTDP  
**CORE TRAINING IN**  
**Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy**  
Three-year IEDTA-certified clinical training in Warsaw, Poland

This Core Training offers a comprehensive clinical formation in ISTDP within the wider field of Experiential Dynamic Therapy. The programme combines theoretical teaching, experiential learning, and intensive video-based supervision of participants' own psychotherapy sessions. Trainees learn from their own work, from the supervision of colleagues, and from the direct clinical material presented by faculty.

The training is designed for licensed mental health professionals who want a rigorous, developmentally sequenced route into advanced ISTDP practice. It meets IEDTA criteria for Core Training in ISTDP and supports sustained growth in assessment, alliance building, defence work, anxiety regulation, emotional breakthrough, working through, and clinical self-reflection.

### Programme at a glance

**Format:** Three years

**Frequency:** Four training blocks per year

**Block length:** Two or three days

**Location:** Warsaw, Poland and online

**Methods:** Seminars, video supervision, role-plays, formulation exercises

**Between blocks:** Peer supervision, seminars, online

**Certification:** IEDTA Certified

**Core ISTDP number 10:** starts in June 2026

**Core ISTDP number 11:** In English, online only,  
starts in November 2026



[www.istdp.pl](http://www.istdp.pl) [biuro@istdp.pl](mailto:biuro@istdp.pl)

## Who this training is for

Licensed mental health professionals, including psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, medical doctors, counsellors, family therapists, and social workers, who wish to undertake advanced clinical training in ISTDP.

## How participants learn

### Theory

Core concepts, metapsychology, psychodiagnosis, and treatment phases.

### Clinical video

Edited and full-length recordings from faculty and trainees.

### Supervision

In-group review of participants' own clinical material.

### Experiential learning

Role-plays, formulation exercises, and focused skills practice.

## Three-year training structure

The programme is organised as a developmental sequence. Year 1 builds conceptual and technical foundations, Year 2 deepens skill integration and the handling of resistance, and Year 3 consolidates clinical mastery, complexity, and working through. This structure is based on 13 ISTDP psychotherapist competencies based on Kees Cornelissen work, which progresses from foundational exposure to skill integration and clinical mastery, while emphasising psychodiagnosis, mobilisation and pressure, anxiety, defence, emotion, the person of the therapist, supervision and ethics.

### Year 1

- Introduction to core concepts
- The Central Dynamic Sequence
- Working safely with ISTDP
- The unconscious therapeutic alliance
- Psychodiagnosis in ISTDP

### Year 2

- Trial therapy, portrayals and unlocking the unconscious
- Dynamic hypotheses and following the unconscious
- High character resistance: vertical unlocking
- Resistance with repression: the graded approach
- Fragility: managing CPD and primitive defences

### Year 3

- Working with complexity: deactivating projection, compliance and defiance
- Severe fragility: psychic integration and stabilization
- The systemic application of ISTDP: teams, consultation and supervision
- Facilitating the process of working through
- Facilitating endings in ISTDP

## Learning objectives

- Understand the theoretical and clinical foundations of ISTDP, including the patient's position on the psychodiagnostic spectrum.
- Conduct dynamic assessment of anxiety regulation, reaching out through defences, superego pathology, ego adaptive capacity, and the quality of the working alliance.
- Apply the Triangles of Conflict and Person and work within the Central Dynamic Sequence.
- Establish, maintain, and deepen the conscious and unconscious working alliance.
- Work with defensive processes using interventions such as confrontation, identification, clarification, pressure, challenge, head-on collision, bracing, recapitulation, rerouting, and doubling.
- Support the constructive experiencing and processing of impulses, feelings, guilt, and grief, including the unlocking of previously avoided trauma material.
- Work across the phases of treatment, including assessment, active treatment, working through, termination, and follow-up preparation.

## Competency-based development

The programme supports progressive development across the following 13 ISTDP therapist competencies:

1. Central Dynamic Sequence (CDS)
2. Anxiety Regulation
3. Confrontation–Identification–Clarification (CIC)
4. Process Leading
5. Theory & Dynamic Diagnosis
6. Emotion Regulation
7. Resistance Analysis and Working through
8. Ego-Adaptive Capacity (EAC) Building
9. Head-On Collision (HOC)
10. Work with Conflict & Person Triangles
11. Recognising & Disarming Projections
12. Breakthrough & Unlocking (rage–guilt–grief–love)
13. Countertransference of the psychotherapist

# Supervision, assessment, and deliberate practice

As in standard ISTDP Core Training, participants present video recordings of their psychotherapy sessions for supervision within the group. Learning is strengthened through repeated review of clinical material, active participation in discussion, and encouraged peer supervision between blocks. Progress is evaluated through ongoing supervision of clinical work and engagement in the programme. The attached curriculum also highlights supervision and video review, systematic preparation for supervision, reflective awareness of the therapist's own feelings, anxiety and defences, and ethical clarity as integral parts of development.

## What participants are expected to do

- Attend four training blocks per year for three years.
- Present multiple video recordings of clinical sessions for supervision. (minimum 12)
- Prepare short clinical summaries or transcripts in advance based on Mastering ISTDP (initial and interim assessment).
- Participate actively in discussion, role-play, and formulation exercises.
- Meet in peer supervision groups between blocks in between CORE sessions.

## What participants gain

- A coherent developmental route into advanced ISTDP practice.
- Repeated exposure to faculty clinical material and close video-based supervision.
- Progressive competence in psychodiagnosis, alliance work, defence restructuring, and breakthrough processes.
- A clinically grounded understanding of treatment phases, from assessment to termination and follow-up.
- Eligibility to pursue further IEDTA certification steps after appropriate post-Core development.

## Lead trainers

### Joanna Duchniewicz, MD, MA Psych

Psychiatrist, psychologist, psychotherapist, coach, trainer, and lecturer; IEDTA certified teacher and supervisor in ISTDP. She has practiced psychotherapy since 2000 and has worked in ISTDP since 2008. She completed accredited psychotherapy trainings in individual, group, couples, and family psychotherapy. Her clinical experience includes work at the Laboratory of Psychoeducation in Warsaw, the development of therapeutic services including a day treatment psychiatric unit for children and adolescents in Gdańsk, and work at the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Clinic in Warsaw from 2014 to 2024. She was trained internationally with leading ISTDP clinicians including Josette ten Have-de Labije, Robert Neborsky, Allan Abbass, Jon Frederickson, Kees Cornelissen, Ferruccio Osimo, Patricia Coughlin and John Rathauer. Since 2013 she has assisted, and since 2017 co-led, Core Training programmes with Josette ten Have-de Labije and other international supervisors. She is also the Polish scientific editor of the ISTDP textbooks Mastering ISTDP and Reaching Through Resistance. Works under supervision of Josette ten Have-de Labije and John Rathauer. Co-Founder of Polish ISTDP Association since 2016.

### Przemysław Duchniewicz, MD, MA

Medical doctor, psychotherapist, trainer, and IEDTA certified teacher and supervisor in ISTDP. He has worked in the ISTDP approach since 2013 and completed the three-year Core Training led by Josette ten Have-de Labije and Kees Cornelissen. His clinical background includes work at the Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology in Warsaw and the Department of Psychiatry at Wolski Hospital. Since 2017 he has assisted in international Core Training programmes and since 2022 has been involved in co-leading certified Core Training programmes as well as introductory and Pre-Core ISTDP courses. He was trained internationally with leading ISTDP clinicians including Josette ten Have-de Labije, Robert Neborsky, Allan Abbass, Kees Cornelissen, Ferruccio Osimo, and John Rathauer. He regularly participates in international seminars and supervision groups with leading ISTDP clinicians and has contributed to the development of training, supervision, seminars, and international educational events. Since 2022 he has been a member of the IEDTA Education Committee. He is also the Polish scientific editor of the ISTDP textbooks Mastering ISTDP and Reaching Through Resistance. Works under supervision of Josette ten Have-de Labije and John Rathauer. Co-Founder of Polish ISTDP Association and its president since 2016.

## Guest faculty and practical information

The programme periodically invites international IEDTA certified supervisors and experienced ISTDP trainers as guest teachers and supervisors. To date, guest faculty in person have included Josette ten Have-de Labije, Kees Cornelissen, Robert Neborsky, John Rathauer, Ferruccio Osimo, and Mark Stein.

Exact training dates are established in consultation with the training group before the start of each training year. Annual fee information is provided upon application.

## Extended learning pathway and related services

Centrum ISTDP offers a broader developmental route around Core Training. The pathway begins with introductory and pre-Core learning and continues through advanced post-Core development, supervised practice, and faculty pathways. This allows participants to build competence step by step rather than viewing Core Training as an isolated event. Usually participants train with Centrum ISTDP for more than 6 years and approach official Certification process in Polish ISTDP Association and other Psychotherapy Associations in Poland.

Alongside the three-year Core, the Centre provides focused skills training, thematic seminars, supervision, and assistant opportunities that support movement toward certification and, for some clinicians, later development as assistants, teachers, and supervisors.

Stage of development	Related learning opportunities
<b>Before Core</b>	Introduction to ISTDP / preCORE courses provide an entry route for helping professionals who want to become familiar with the method before beginning full Core Training.
<b>Focused skills training</b>	Specialist courses include work with fragile and dissociative patients and work with highly resistant patients, both taught through extended video case material organised around the Central Dynamic Sequence.
<b>Alongside and after Core</b>	The Centre offers ongoing individual and group supervision, workshops, seminars, masterclasses, and conference-based learning with Polish and international ISTDP faculty.
<b>Post-Core development</b>	Graduates may continue in Advanced Core ISTDP, assistant development, and supported pathways toward later IEDTA teacher and supervisor certification requirements.

This layered pathway reflects the ISTDP Centre's developmental approach: introduction, Core formation, advanced consolidation, and longer-term faculty development within the ISTDP community.

### Registration and contact

Przemyslaw Duchniewicz | [biuro@istdp.pl](mailto:biuro@istdp.pl) | [www.istdp.pl](http://www.istdp.pl)  
Centrum ISTDP, Warsaw, Mazowieckie, Poland