



## Attachment-Based Family Therapy Training Process

The Attachment-Based Family Therapy (ABFT) International Training Institute has a structured process for certifying therapists in ABFT. Training consists of three progressive levels, beginning with an introductory workshop and culminating in certification. The entire certification process typically takes 18-24 months, though it can be completed in a minimum of one year. It involves didactic training, group or individual supervision, and video-based consultations with feedback.

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### Certification Status

- **ABFT-Informed Work:** Therapists in training may describe their practice as ABFT-informed.
- **ABFT Level II Therapist:** Therapists who have completed all of the requirements for Level II and passed the exam, may refer to themselves as ABFT Level II Therapists.
- **ABFT-Certified Therapist:** Upon certification, therapists may refer to themselves as ABFT-certified.

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**Website Listings:** Therapists participating in supervision groups can list their contact information on the ABFT International website (<https://abftinternational.com/find-an-abft-therapist/>) as:

- Level I Trained Therapist (after starting supervision).
- Level II Trained Therapist (after achieving Level II status).
- ABFT-Certified Therapist (after certification).

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Training Timeline	
Timing	Content
Start	Fundamentals of ABFT and Core Methods of ABFT Workshops
0-3 months post workshop	Obtain cases and begin group consultation
3- 15 months	Participate in group and/or individual consultation
6 months or more	Advanced Workshop
6 – 24 months	Submit tapes for tape review (approximately 1-2 tapes per month)

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### Therapist Requirements:

#### U.S. Therapists:

- Minimum: Master's degree in social work, mental health counseling, clinical/counseling psychology, or couple's and family therapy.
- If unlicensed: Must be employed and receiving supervision.

#### International Therapists:

- Local certification or licensure allowing therapy practice is required.

#### *Clinical Time:*

- To participate in Level II or III, therapists must have the capacity to treat at least 2-3 ABFT clients concurrently.

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## Target Audience:

- **Primary Audience:** Counselors, Couple and Family Therapists, Mental Health Professionals, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Psychotherapists, Social Workers.
  - **Introductory Workshop (Part One):** Also suitable for Case Workers, ER Physicians, Health Care Administrators, Frontline Mental Health Staff, Primary Care Physicians, and SAP Team members.
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## Suicide Prevention Licensure Requirements:

ABFT Introductory workshops and the Fundamentals of ABFT Online Self-Paced Course meet licensure requirements for suicide prevention training in these state

- California: AB-89 Psychologists and AB-1436
  - Indiana: HB 1430 Suicide Awareness and Prevention
  - Kentucky: KRS 210.366 Training in suicide assessment, treatment and prevention for Psychologists and Social Workers
  - Nevada: AB:93 Suicide Prevention and intervention
  - New Hampshire: SB 33 CE requirements for mental health practitioners on suicide prevention
  - Pennsylvania: Act 74 – CE in assessment, treatment, and management of suicide risk
  - Tennessee: SB 489 Suicide prevention, assessment and screening, treatment, management, and postvention
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## Level I: Introductory Workshop Series

### Workshop Structure

- **Fundamentals of ABFT:**
  - Lecture and therapy demonstration tapes are used to provide an overview of the model including theoretical foundation and clinical strategies of ABFT.
  - Faculty review how attachment theory, emotional regulation and trauma resolution inform the delivery of this experiential treatment approach.
  - Faculty also review the goals and structure of the five treatment tasks that provide a road map for delivering this interpersonally focused psychotherapy effectively and rapidly.
  - \*\*Organizations can opt to just have the Fundamentals of ABFT workshop as an overview of the model.
- **Core Methods of ABFT:**
  - Builds on the Fundamentals of ABFT Course.
  - In-depth exploration of procedures and processes of ABFT, including case discussions, tape reviews, and role-plays.
  - Throughout the Core Methods of ABFT workshop, therapists are also taught how to use the ABFT adherence checklists.

### *Benefits*

- **Fundamentals of ABFT:**
  - Understand how attachment theory informs family interventions.
  - Gain a general introduction to the task structure of the model

- **Core Methods of ABFT:**
  - More in-depth exposure to the scaffold of each task.
  - Gain practical skills to apply ABFT with cooperative families.

### ***Fundamentals of ABFT Self-Paced Course***

- Pre-recorded lectures and therapy demonstration cases.
- Allows immediate, flexible access to training materials.
- Equivalent to the Fundamentals of ABFT Workshop, making clinicians eligible to participate in Part Two of the Introductory Workshop.

### **Delivery Options:**

- Fundamentals of ABFT Workshop Only: Full day or two half days or Fundamentals of ABFT Self-Paced Course
- Core Methods of ABFT Workshop: Two full days or four half days.
- Full Workshop Series: Three full days or six half days.

## **Level II: Supervision and Advanced Workshop**

### Supervision

- **Format:**
  - 22 fortnightly 60-minute sessions via video conferencing.
  - Individual or group format
- **Requirements:**
  - Present at least 4 cases.
  - Use ABFT Case Write-up Outline for presentations.
  - Show 5-10 minute video excerpts from therapy sessions.

### *Benefits:*

- Helps therapists implement ABFT more effectively with clients.
- Learn how to conceptualize from an ABFT framework to utilize ABFT with a variety of different clients, presenting problems, and difficult situations.
- Through presenting 5-10 minute videos of sessions, therapists receive detailed feedback on the moment-by-moment decisions that occur in therapy.
- Address person-of-the-therapist issues to deepen therapeutic effectiveness.

### Advanced Workshop

- **Timing:** Six months post-introductory workshop series (or later).
- **Focus:**
  - Designed to advance therapist's ABFT skills.
  - Through didactic presentations, exercises, therapy demonstration tapes, and roleplays participants learn about the following topics:
    - Person of the therapist issues related to ABFT.
    - Emotional deepening skills in the context of ABFT
    - Challenges faced when implementing the model for each task are discussed.

### *Benefits:*

- Gain an understanding of how one's own attachment history creates barriers or can help facilitate delivery of therapy.

- Learn how to utilize one’s own personal experiences in life to build empathy and understanding of their clients’ experiences.
- Achieve new understanding of how to emotionally deepen ABFT work with clients.
- Understand how to adapt and/or modify ABFT with more challenging clients.

### **Requirements to achieve Level II trained ABFT Therapist Status**

- Participate in 22 supervision sessions.
  - Present at least 4 cases during supervision utilizing the case write-up or case conceptualization form.
  - Show at least 2 video excerpts of cases during the course of supervision.
  - Attend the ABFT Advanced Workshop
  - Pass the ABFT Exam with at least at least an 80%.
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### **Level III: Videotape Review leading to Certification**

#### Timing

- Begin after attending the Advanced Workshop.
- May still be participating in Level 2 Supervision

#### Process

- Submit 10 full-length session videos one at a time.
- Provide case write-ups, self-feedback (with suggestions for how to improve parts of the session that are not consistent with ABFT or could be improved in general) , and self-rated adherence ratings.
- Receive detailed written feedback from certified supervisors.
- 20-minute consult with supervisor is optional

\* Tapes need to be conducted in English or need to be transcribed to English for review.

#### Certification

- Therapists rated adherent across all 5 tasks are considered certified.
- Additional tapes may be required if therapists are not meeting adherence after 10 tapes.
- Certification never expires

#### *Benefits*

- Assurance of ABFT fidelity.
  - Confidence in representing ABFT as intended.
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### **Readings**

Therapists who will pursue Level II Training or Certification are required to read the treatment manual titled, “Attachment-Based Family Therapy for Depressed Adolescents” which was published by the American Psychological Association (Diamond, Diamond & Levy, 2014).

It is recommended that therapists read the manual prior to attending the two-part introductory workshop but is not required.

The book can be found here: <https://www.apa.org/pubs/books/attachment-based-family-therapy-for-depressed-adolescents>

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## **ADDITIONAL TRAINING/SUPPORT**

### **ABFT Demonstration Therapy Video Program (asynchronous)**

- 5 recorded excerpts from demonstrations of ABFT therapy sessions illustrating core components of each task (7-10 minutes in length).
- Each video is presented in two ways: 1) without interruption, 2) with Q&A to highlight essential ABFT principles and strategies demonstrated in the therapy recordings.
  - Each 7-10 minute video is intended to condense what might take 20 to 30 minutes in a real session. Nearly every therapist speech turn represents an ABFT theme.
- Course access is provided for 90 days or licensed annually for organizations.

### **ABFT Special Topics Webinars**

- Approximately 2x/year we host 90-minute webinars about special topics related to ABFT.
- Previously presented webinars can be purchased on our website.

### **Ongoing Supervision/Support**

- If therapists desire supervision beyond their 1-year contract, they may pay for ongoing supervision.

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For more info about our training opportunities, please visit our website: <https://courses.abftinternational.com/>

