A brief introduction to AMBIT
(Adaptive Mentalization-Based Integrative Treatment)

1. AMBIT a brief introduction
2. AMBIT – explicitly supporting team members to mentalize each other as well as clients
3. AMBIT – systematic mentalizing across complex multiagency networks
4. AMBIT – systematically apply implementation science/foster learning organisations
A cumulative burden of rubble, rather than a simple single problem
Problems recognised by >2000 workers

Offers of help are rejected
(Epistemic mistrust)

Workers become Anxious
(& anxiety diminishes mentalizing)

Case Complexity
(Leads to dis-integration)

Inability to learn new tricks
(Implicit over explicit practice)
The “Hard-to-reach”, Mentalizing, and Learning

Csibra and Gergely

An evolved mechanism for communicating culturally-specific and cognitively-opaque “knowledge-about-living”

EPISTEMIC TRUST, OSTENSIVE CUES & the PEDAGOGIC STANCE

JARGON ALERT

(Eyes and door – W. Rosocha)
Egyed, Kiraly, Gergely (2013)

Communicating Shared Knowledge in Infancy

Psychological Science vol. 24 no. 7 1348-1353

Mentalizing is the Ostensive Cue “par excellence” for Epistemic Trust
Making Sense of Mentalizing

Mentalization is the brain activity that takes place when we are making sense of behaviours (yours, or mine) by assuming the agent is mental…

…has a MIND with beliefs, hopes, fears, intentions…
Rejection and distrust are often purposeful (they must have adaptive value).

This work should make us workers anxious (shame reduces help-seeking).

Dis-integration is the natural resting state of complex networks (not result of malice, etc).

Learning is essential (and learning what to do is easier than how to be).
Mentalizing

- Working with your CLIENT
- Working with your TEAM
- Working with your NETWORK
- LEARNING at work

- Managing Risk
- Working in multiple Domains
- Keyworker responsible for integration
- Respect for Evidence
- Respect for Local Practice and expertise
- Keyworker well connected to team
- Individual key relationship
- Scaffolding existing relationships
Team around the Worker: A shift of emphasis

Team around the child

- Psychiatrist
- Family therapist
- CBT Trauma specialist
- YOT/Youth Worker
- CPN

Team around the worker

- Psychiatrist
- Social Worker
- Family Systemic
- CBT Trauma specialist
- Young Person and Family
- Other co-workers

A trusted "key" worker

Epistemic Trust

Mentalization as basic therapeutic stance, AND shared responsibility: sustaining our colleagues’ Mentalizing – “holding their rope”
Thinking Together

‘Kickstarting’ mentalizing in the consulting colleague, and contracting in to the purpose of our conversation, time boundaries, etc. Why are you coming to me? What would help look like if I (the consultant) provided it?

Keeping to the simple bones of the case, and avoiding storytelling. What do you, helper, need to know to help me with this task? (Consultant holds these boundaries.)

First, mentalize the worker, not the client (they are not present). Can the consulting colleague feel their predicament is understood? Only then mentalize the client(s), allowing the worker to listen “from the edge of the pond”.

Consultant has contracted to fulfill a predetermined task. Invite the worker to reflect on the mentalizing, and collaborate to generate simple, digestible, contingent answers.

Creating culture: Rituals and Social Disciplines in a team to foster and protect mentalizing.
Nobody ever argued
“What we need is more dis-integrated working!”
...so why do we keep doing it?

1. **Reconfiguring expectations**
   Dis-integration is the *natural resting state* of complex multi-agency systems, not just aberration/failure!

2. **Reducing professional shame**
   Dis-integration is very rarely an intentional act; it is usually a predictable system-driven response, each time similar, but different.
   Shame reduces help-seeking, increases secrecy.

3. **Rethinking reorganisations**
   Teleological system reorganisation (alone) is never going to be enough. *Understanding* (mentalizing) across systems is required, too

3. **Helping systems** require mind-mindedness too…
### Dis-integration Grid – map the key Connecting Conversations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF DISINTEGRATION</th>
<th>Young Person</th>
<th>Parent/carer</th>
<th>Other agency (actual person)</th>
<th>Other agency (actual person)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Explanation
‘What’s the problem?’

#### Intervention
‘What to do?’
(that might help…)

#### Responsibility
‘Who does what?’
(who’s responsible?)

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Thank you for Listening! ...............References:

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2016

www.tiddlymanuals.com
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AMBIT BOOK
(O.U.P.)
Out this summer!
Bevington, Fuggle, Fonagy, Cracknell