



**IAFP**

International Association  
for Forensic Psychotherapy

**31st Annual IAFP Conference**  
**May 18 - 20, 2023**  
**Turin, Italy**

**From Pain to Violence:  
Prevention and Intervention**

*For further information go to:*  
[www.forensicpsychotherapy.org](http://www.forensicpsychotherapy.org)

*or contact the organizers*  
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# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Dr Felicity De Zulueta (UK)

Professor Franco Freilone (Italy)

Dr Alfred Garwood (UK)

Professor Brett Kahr (UK)

Dr Matthieu La Cambre (France)

Dr Will Linden (UK)

Dr Livia Locci (Italy)

Dr Caterina Marchetti (Italy)

Dr Franco Scarpa (Italy)

Dr Estela Welldon (UK)



The psychic act of thinking has the function of containing and processing emotional experiences. But what happens with the experience of psychic pain? According to the forensic psychiatrist and psychotherapist James Gilligan, “to be overwhelmed by shame and humiliation is to experience the destruction of self-esteem; and without a certain minimal amount of self-esteem, the self collapses and the soul dies” (Gilligan, 1999).

Paraphrasing Bion (1963), when a part of the self dies, pain can be experienced but not felt; if unprocessed, it can sometimes erupt in violence both towards the self and the other. Pain is a fact of life and the capacity to suffer is indispensable. It is therefore necessary to develop a system to process psychic suffering, to try to prevent acts of violence. At the beginning of life, the baby learns to suffer and survive the experience within the relationship with the mother, who initially contains it and processes it. The relationship is crucial as it does not leave the baby alone with her pain and allows the development of a language to articulate the feeling and think about it. ‘Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break’ (Shakespeare, Macbeth IV, III 209-10).

Working in forensic settings, whether as therapists or other professions we often have to sit with and bear our patient’s pain and its violent manifestations, before they can begin to be able to feel it and manage it themselves without needing to resort to acting out.

The International Association for Forensic Psychotherapy 2023 conference entitled “From Pain to Violence: Prevention and Intervention” will explore how understanding and managing psychic pain can help prevent and potentially reduce violence. This two-day conference hopes to welcome not only those who specialise in forensic mental health, including our colleagues in nursing, social work, probation, counselling, psychology, psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, but also those from related disciplines in criminal justice, including criminology, social policy and the law.