

John Pihlaja

Four decades of training, psychotherapy, clinical supervision and leadership

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1. Personal details

John Henric Noël Pihlaja, born 1950. Married, father of two and grandfather of four. Finnish and Canadian citizenship.

2. Basic education

Post-graduate (doctorate) studies in Social Psychology, University of Helsinki (Dissertation on effectiveness of psychotherapy training)	2004 –
Master's Degree in Social Psychology, University of Helsinki Minors: Sociology, Social and Moral Philosophy	2002
Applied Specialisation Studies in Social Psychology (38 ECST credits) University of Helsinki	2002
Matriculation Examination, Lycée franco-finlandais d'Helsinki	1969
Harbord Collegiate Institute Toronto	1963-1965

3. Theoretical training in Psychotherapy (2821h) and Pedagogy (1120h)

Training in solution-focused, narrative, systemic etc. therapy (1106h)

European Brief Therapy Association EBTA 2009 Helsinki	2009	24h
Skills in Solution-Focused Practice RATKES Seminar / Family Therapist FMT Frank Thomas	2009	16h
In search of the good life; good life and happiness RATKES Seminar / Helge Svare and Perttu Salovaara	2008	16h
From knots into openings in client and therapy work RATKES Seminar / John Henden	2008	16h
Single Session Therapy RATKES Seminar / Scot Cooper	2007	16h
On what is, and on what could be – narrative practice in client work / Scot Cooper	2006	
Toward a Landscape of Possibilities Advanced Level Training in Narrative Therapy / Maggie Carrey organized by RATKES, the Finnish Association for Solution-Focused Practice	2006	16h
European Brief Therapy Association EBTA Congress Krakow	2006	24h

Safari of Inspiration and Sharing RATKES, the Finnish Association for Solution-Focused Practice	2006	8h
The dialogic, narrative and reflective turn in psychotherapy Aulanko: White, Shotter, Anderson, Andersen	2006	24h
Toward a Landscape of Possibilities RATKES Seminar, Helsinki and Turku / Scot Cooper	2006	24h
National Congress of Family Therapy / Oulu	2006	22h
Leadership and Well-being at Work RATKES: Charles Elliott, Ahola, Litovaara et al.	2005	16h
Intensive training in brief and narrative therapy Certificate program, Dalhousie University, Halifax	2005	32h
NLP- Master Practitioner The Finnish Red Cross, Emergency Youth Shelter Personnel training with a narrative focus / Lauri Heikkilä FM	2005	140h
Finnish Family Therapy Association Spring Seminar Sören Hertz	2005	16h
RATKES Association Solution Focused Seminars 14 * 2 days	2003-2011	224h
Critical Values –congress RATKES / Finnish NLP Association	2004	16h
Reteaming Helsinki Summer University / Tapani Ahola	2004	8h
Therapy with resistant clients Voimala Co-operative for Youth and Social Work / Insoo Kim Berg	2004	8h
Voimala Toolbox1 Voimala Co-operative for Youth and Social Work / Sara Vataja	2004	8h
Common Ground – Versatile Practices Anderson, Andersen, White	2004	24h
Key Questions: a new approach to therapy, human resources, education and business Helsinki Summer University / Grevelius, Salamon	2003	16h
Basics of Solution-Focused Practice Helsinki Summer University / Anneli Litovaara	2003	8h
Safari of Inspiration and Sharing RATKES, the Finnish Association for Solution-Focused Practice	2002–2003	48h
Dialogue Forum / Social Poetics	1996	8h
Dialogue Forum Kenneth Gergen, John Shotter et al.	1995	16h
Re-authoring seminar Gregory Smith / Jorvi Hospital	1995	16h
Resource and Solution-Focused client work 22 ECST credits Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education, University of Helsinki	1995	480h
Solution-Focused Practice in social work Mannerheim League for Child Welfare / Vataja, Makkonen	1991	16h
Seminar in Inspiration, Training, Consultation and Clinical Supervision Mannerheim League for Child Welfare / Ahola, Furman	1990	8h
Strategic Brief Therapy Seminar Mannerheim League for Child Welfare / Ahola, Furman	1986	16h

Related training in brief therapy (248h)

Meeting of therapeutic tribes NLP Congress 2006 / Aavaranta	2006	12h
NLP-Practitioner Helsinki Summer University / Barbara Waggoner	1998	140h
Training in Cognitive Brief Therapy Courses by Maxie C. Maultsby, 12 days	1993–1997	96h

Related training in Psychology and Psychotherapy (1467h)

Psychotherapy Research Seminar University of Jyväskylä, Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre	2011	14h
Psychotherapy Research Seminar University of Jyväskylä, Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre	2010	14h
Psychotherapy Research Seminar University of Jyväskylä, Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre	2009	14h
Psychotherapy Research Seminar University of Jyväskylä, Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre	2008	22h
Seminar in Social Psychology 2006	2006	12h
Psychotherapy / Consensus Meeting 2006 The Finnish Medical Society Duodecim, Academy of Finland	2006	14h
Psychotherapy Research Seminar University of Jyväskylä, Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre	2006	14h
Psychologist Trade Fair	2005	14h
Social Psychology Seminar 7*8 and 10*14 hours	1989–2005	196h
Evidence Based Psychotherapy Seminar University of Jyväskylä, Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre	2004	14h
Applied Professional Specialisation Studies in Social Psychology: Debriefing Seminar	1996	40h
Counselling Supervision	1999	200h
Group Work Module	2002	200h
Theory of Evaluation Seminar	2002	40h
Course in Psychotherapy Research University of Jyväskylä, Department of Psychology	1994	24h
Creativity in Health Education Finnish Centre for Health Promotion	1986	14h
Reichian Psychotherapy Elämäntaidon kasvukeskus ry (Centre for Life Skills, Finland) / courses by Eva Reich	1982	74h
Course in Parenting Skills Järvenpää Parish	1979	9h
Gestalt Therapy Training, Gestalt Terapiayhdistys ry. (Gestalt Therapy Association, Finland)	1976–1979	600h

Studies in Pedagogy (1120h)

Community reinforcement and family training –trainer program, Myllyhoitoyhdistys ry (The Finnish Centre for the Minnesota Method) / Robert J. Meyers	2005	8h
As part of Master's Degree in Social Psychology: Collaborative learning	1995	40h
Scientific thinking and action as a creative process	1993	100h

Suggestopedic teaching method AIM Accelerated Instruction Methods Ltd Personnel training / Mikael Jaget	1988–1991	48h
Suggestopedic teaching method Helsinki Summer University / Gabriel Racle	1982	24h
Teacher Training Course Maharishi European Research University (Switzerland)	1971–1973	900h

4. Clinical supervision, received (410h)

Solution-Focused clinical supervision (338h)

Clinical supervision (reciprocal) Psychiatrist Pauli Karvonen and Senior Psychotherapy Trainer Teijo Kurki Pekka Aarninsalo	2006–2008	32h
Teijo Kurki	2003–2006	38h
Teijo Kurki	2003–2006	48h
Clinical supervision (reciprocal) Trainer, clinical supervisor Hannele Nykänen/ IJKK Power! -project and Myllyhoitoyhdistys ry (The Finnish Centre for the Minnesota Method)	1997–2000	220h

Related clinical supervision (72h)

Humanistic, transpersonal and Gestalt therapy Clinical Supervision Matti Luoma MPsy, Docent of Philosophy of Culture	1976–1979	72h
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5. Clinical supervision, practiced (>2300h)

Clinical supervision of Psychotherapy Training Programs Helsinki Psychotherapy Institute	2007 –	~600h
Alvi Association, group clinical supervision	2006–2009	60h
Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa / Psychiatry center	2006–2007	36h
Psychiatric Unit of the City of Hyvinkää	2004–2005	30h
Myyrmäki Social and Health Centre Clinical supervision for speech therapists	2005–2008	60h
Tuusula Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centre	1993–2001	78h
Related individual and group supervision no less than 5% of annual work	1993–2011	1520h

6. Personal psychotherapy / training related therapy / self-development (75h + 160h = 235h)

Solution-Focused self-development Peter Sundman	2006–2007	51h
Solution-Focused self-development Helsinki Summer University / Tapani Ahola	2006	8h
Consultation Centre of Mannerheim League for Child Welfare ~16 sessions: Sirpa Heikkola, Mikko Makkonen	1992–1993	16h
Gestalt Therapy training related therapy In-group >120h, Self-therapy exercises >40h Gestalt Therapy Association (Finland) / Leo Matos	1976–1979	160h

7. Independent study (>10 000h)

Study of approx. 100 000 pages of literature on following topics: psychotherapy, psychotherapy research, ethics, pedagogy, philosophy of science, mental health

8. Psychotherapeutic client work (2840h)

Private practice, no less than 50h annually	1993–2012	1000h
Pro bonum private practice, no less than 30h annually	1993–2012	600h
Power! -project: group psychotherapy and training	1997–2001	1240h

9. Training experience (>6000h)

Senior Psychotherapy Trainer Helsinki Psychotherapy Institute	2007–	>1200h
Clinical Supervision Training Committee Chair Helsinki Psychotherapy Institute	since 2008	
Professional development studies for the helping professions Summer Universities of Turku, Tampere and Lahti; The Institute for Extension Studies, Tampere etc. No less than 200h annually	1985–	4000h
"Mistä poikki, mihin jengat": common ground for helping professions The Finnish Red Cross, Emergency Youth Shelter, Personnel training	2006	7h
Activating the Impossible Client; Tools and Resources Training in Solution-Focused practice / Häme Summer University	2004	18h
Persevering together: Resources and management training / Finnish Hairdressers' Association	2002–2003	32h
Trainer training for Regional Associations Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities	2001–2002	
Training of in-house trainers / Keuda Apprenticeship Training Centre	2000–2005	
Support person training Central Association for Mental Health	1996–2003	
Interview Intervention tutorial / Advanced Studies University of Helsinki, Department of Social Psychology	1995	80h
Cognitive Brief Therapy based Life Skills: Intermediate course Institute of Adult Education in Helsinki, 6 days	1995	18h
Stability in the midst of change in the workplace Society for Organisational Development	1995	8h
Cognitive Brief Therapy based Life Skills: Basic course Institute of Adult Education in Helsinki, 6 days	1994	18h
Improving preconditions for better service City of Helsinki / Social Services Department	1994	16h
"Mistä poikki, mihin jengat": Solution-Focused Therapy practices in demanding client work Community College of Hollola	1992–1993	48h
Improving preconditions for better service City of Helsinki / Social Services Department	1992	32h
Solution-Focused clinical supervision training, Hollola	1991–1993	128h
Work Community Development Course The Finnish Rheumatism Association Hospital	1991	20h
Brief Therapy Skills of Upper Management The Summer University of Turku	1990	24h
How to survive in helping professions – Burnout seminar Summer University of Häme	1988	16h
Work identity and the self in helping professions School of Art and Design / Art Therapy Course	1986	6h

Burnout: How to survive in relationship work Kuortane Community College	1986	12h
Radical Therapy Seminar Community College of Kalliola	1986	6h
Therapeutical Practices Tampere Summer University	1986	40h

Training in related areas (>2000h)

Therapies East and West -Seminar	1980	24h
Meditation Teacher Training Program, joint Senior Trainer Teacher Training Course I, 12 weeks	1976	480h
Training of Meditation Assistant Instructors	1972–1979	200h
Individual Mentor	1971–1980	600h
Group Mentor	1971–1979	320h
Intermediate Level Group Mentor	1971–1979	400h

10. Other merits in psychotherapy, training and management

Training planning and developmental experience

Viritys-project of RAY, Finland's Slot Machine Association, and Myllyhoitoyhdistys (The Finnish Centre for the Minnesota Method), Board Member	2003 – 2006
Persevering Together! Helsinki Area Hairdressers' Association and Resources in Work Project Board Member	2002 – 2003
"Warm Caring Hands" – Finnish Union of Practical Nurses, Resources in Work Project Board Member	2002 – 2003
Solution-Focused Psychological Group Training for Long-Term Unemployed Head of the Planning, Team Assembling, Practice Development, Clinical supervision, Power!–project.	1997 – 2001
Suggestopedic training planning, AIM- Accelerated Instruction Methods Ltd, Partner and Trainer	1987 – 1992

Management and financial administration

RATKES, the Finnish Association for Solution-Focused Practice, planning and development of financial administration and management	2003–2011
Aulis® and Exim® financial management software development and project management / Softaxi Ltd	1990–2001
Accounts and payroll software end-user and support personnel training / Softaxi Ltd	1990–2001
Over 40 years of experience as an entrepreneur	

Related areas

Quality estimation related research in labour market training; commissioned by Southwest Finland Regional centre for employment and economic development, 1998–2000

Psychiatric care worker in the following units of Hesperia, Nikkilä, Kellokoski and Ohkola Mental Institutions: Children, Geriatric, Acute, Youth and Chronic, 1977–1984

NGO experience

RATKES ry, the Finnish Association for Solution-Focused Practice, Chair 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006; Board Member 2002–2009, Member of the Certification Board 2006–2009, Chair of the Psychotherapy Committee 2006–2008

Finnish Social Psychologists Association Chair 2007–2009, Vice Chair 2005 and 2006, Board Member since the founding meeting 1995–2009

British Psychological Society Member 2006 –

National Association of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapists Member 2004 –

Finnish Family Therapy Association Member 1985 –

Registered Clinical Supervisor 1986 –

Finnish Gestalt Therapy Association Member 1978 –, Board Member 1980 and 1981

Finnish Transcendental Meditation (TM) Association Founding Member, Secretary 1971–72, Vice Chair 1972–76

Publications related to client work and training

Pihlaja, John (ed.) (2011) *Ratkaisukeskeistä psykoterapiaa oppimassa. (Learning Solution Focused Psychotherapy.)* Helsinki Psychotherapy Institute.

Pihlaja, John (2005) Asking a different kind of question: Transforming nightmare into narrative of empowerment. Published in Cooper Scot J., Duvall Jim (eds.) *Catching the winds of change: conference proceedings.* Brief Therapy Network. Toronto.

Pihlaja, John (2002) *Kurssityytyväisyyden tuolle puolen – Työnhakukoulutuksen laadun mittaamisesta (Beyond course satisfaction – Estimation of quality in labour market training).* Master's Thesis, University of Helsinki.

Pihlaja, John (2002) *Kahvia vai korviketta: Mielenterveyden keskusliiton vertaistukiryhmien periaatteista ja käytännöistä (Coffee or placebo: On peer support group principles and practices in the Finnish Central Association for Mental Health).* *Sosiaalipsykologi* 3/2002.

Lahti, Jukka S. and Pihlaja, John (2001) *Koulutuksen laatu hakusessa (Looking for quality in training).* *Sosiaalipsykologi* 3/2001.

Lahti, Jukka S. and Pihlaja, John (2000) *Muutosta mittaamassa: Varsinais-Suomen TE-keskuksen työvoimaosaston tutkimuksia. (Measuring change: Southwest Finland TE-centre Employment Department Research).*

Pihlaja, John (ed.) (1999) *Elämähallinnan keittokirja: Poweria-projektin kouluttajakäsikirja (Life Skills Cookbook: Power!-project trainer's manual).* Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities.

Pihlaja, John (1996) *Aulis 3.0: Yrittäjän taloushallinnon käyttäjäkäsikirja (Aulis 3.0: Financial administration software user's manual for entrepreneurs).* Softaxi Oy.

Pihlaja, John (1991) *PC tutuksi: Suggestopedinen atk-koulutuksen kouluttajakäsikirja (Getting to Know Your PC: Suggestopedic IT-training trainer's manual).* AIM- Accelerated Instruction Methods Ltd.

Pihlaja, John (1986) *Psykiatria, antipsykiatria ja perhe. (Psychiatry, anti-psychiatry and the family).* Seminar project on social psychology and the family.

Pihlaja, John (1982) *Mentalsjukdomar – finns de? (Mental illnesses – Do They Exist?)* *TM-Nytt* 3/1982.

Publicity work

RATKES – spring and autumn congresses 2005–2009. Steering board member

RATKES – seminar 2003, 2004. RATKES congresses in Helsinki, 250–300 participants each. Project manager

Inhimillisen muutoksen mahdollisuudet (Possibilities for human change): Elämäntaidon kasvukeskus ry (Centre for Life Skills, Finland), series of lectures 1982 – 1984, 26 lectures, 3000 participants