

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy Level 1
London 12-15 November 2018

I am ever so grateful to Foundation for Professionals in Services to Adolescents (FPSA) for enabling me to attend the Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) training level 1. This has been an incredibly generous offer, especially as training and opportunities for CPD are so limited within the NHS.

DDP level 1 was an inspirational training programme, who left me thinking of new ideas and ways of working. It was intensive 4 day training with lots of new therapeutic skills and new approaches to think through.

Dr Dan Hughes, a clinical psychologist by background, who practices mainly in the United States, delivered the training. Dan is one of the main finders of this approach and therefore delivered an incredibly rich training course, full of clinical examples, role plays and discussions.

The teaching style was exceptional and definitely one of the most interesting, refreshing and humorous trainings I have ever attended.

DDP provided the base for a very interesting therapeutic approach which will hopefully have a really positive effect when working with parents and young people. The approach was based on sharing and identifying feelings, enabling parents to respond with empathy to the children's difficulties and enabling the young people develop their emotional language and awareness. This approach was initially developed for adopted and fostered young people, who due to their trauma, struggled to connect with their emotions and with their care givers.

PACE is at the heart of this approach and provides an accessible model for therapeutic parenting. Within my role in CAMHS I often come across young people who have experienced trauma and who have been adopted or are placed with relatives. I have already booked sessions with a family and their social worker to introduce PACE and proceed in such therapeutic approach and I am really looking forward to start the clinical application of such method.

Nevertheless, I have also started applying this approach to non- adoptive families, who struggle to understand and communicate with their children. I feel that DDP offers the opportunity for emotional connection in a way that other interventions are unable to do so, and the 'use of self' and empathic communication make it a unique intervention.

Equally I also started using DDP when I approached a school in relation to a young person and the results were positive. The school was able to develop a greater understanding of the young person's needs and have now started thinking outside of the typical social- behavioural model of learning to a more attachment based style.

Therefore, such intervention can be used not only when working with families but also to the system around a young person.

I left the training feeling really enthusiastic and wanting to continue with further DDP training, as well as perhaps become an accredited practitioner. I am really looking forward to using DDP in my clinical practice and informing parents and professionals of the positive effects of such intervention. Even though we do not have a recognised pathway for such therapeutic intervention I can definitely apply with most families I work, adoptive or not.

Once again I am most appreciative for the financial support as without it, I would have missed this training opportunity. It has been an incredible learning journey for me and I am looking forward to putting DDP into my clinical practice.