

Foundation Year in Systemic Psychotherapy

Prudence and Skynner Family Therapy Clinic

First, I would like to say a huge thank you to FPSA for their kind and generous contribution to funding this course. It meant that I could undertake the training which I have found to be thought provoking as well as enriching my work and skills in working with young people and their families.

Course Overview

The course took place on a weekly basis at the Prudence and Skynner Family Therapy Centre at Springfield University Hospital, South London. It gave an overview of the history of systemic thinking and provided an opportunity to explore systemic models and ideas as well as some techniques which we could apply to our practice. We were taught using various methods including individual self-directed reading, seminars to present theories and models and also small group work in which we often used role plays as a way of applying our learning to our clinical practice using advice from the tutors and our peers. I found this varied way of learning stimulating and it encouraged me to constantly reflect on my current practice and make sense of previous practice.

Course Highlights

The group of attendees on the course came from a wide variety of multi-disciplinary backgrounds. I valued sharing knowledge and ideas with individuals from different working environments and for me this enhanced the overall learning experience.

Throughout the course there has been a strong focus on self-reflexivity and reflective practice. It has been useful to have the space to reflect upon my own values, beliefs and the impact that these have on my work. The impact of issues such as power, gender, race, culture and religion on a young person and their family can sometimes be overlooked, particularly when working in a busy environment. However now with the families that I am working with I actively ensure I consider these issues and find that my understanding of the family's narrative or system is greater.

Impact of training on my practice

As part of the course we have begun to learn about techniques used within systemic practice, such as reframing and externalising the problem. I have since used these techniques in my practice and found that particularly with young people they have been a useful means of encouraging conversation around difficult and sensitive topics.

I have also been able to apply my learning in narrative therapy by co-facilitating a beading group, in which young people use beads as way of talking about their lives outside of their cancer diagnosis. This has been a really supportive way of guiding a young person to start to build their confidence following cancer treatment.

I enrolled on to this training course because I had an interest and curiosity in systemic thinking and practice and wanted to learn more. The course has been a fantastic learning

experience for me and I am now keen to proceed with the next year of the training. I am very grateful to the FPSA for giving me the opportunity to do this training, which I would not have been able to do otherwise.

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