

Dyadic Developmental Practice: Psychotherapy and Parenting

Level One: Introducing a Framework for Therapy and Parenting Developmentally Traumatized Children

Four day training held at Shine in Leeds on 6-9 March 2017

As a therapeutic social worker I have been wanting to attend this training for a long time. I really appreciate the foundation's grant which has allowed me to book onto this four day course. I generally work with looked after children and their carers and have read around this subject but wanted a more in-depth training which I knew would complement my therapy training.

The training was led by Kim Golding who was clearly very experienced and knowledgeable about this subject. What I liked about her was how lightly she wore this knowledge and made me feel that this wasn't something only a select few highly charismatic people could become proficient at. She brought the subject alive and showed us how we could use the ideas flexibly wherever we were working.

There are a number of reports about DDP but it basically focuses on improving the relationship between the child and parent and through this, can help the child feel safer and reduce feelings of shame and anger. The course looked at how trauma and neglect affected the child's attachment and ability to be parented but it mostly concentrated on the actual therapeutic interventions and the elements that make up DDP. We learnt about the idea of PACE, a way of being with others, including children and parents. This encompasses Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy. The idea of not rushing to try and solve problems and reassure, but really listening and staying with the feelings, really stayed with me and I have used this a lot and try to help parents understand the importance of this too. Other elements of the method were the idea of storytelling and slowing things down in sessions, and being both reflective and affective in responses. We also spent time looking at the importance of working with parents and the need for time to do this before any work is started with the child.

Thinking about so many elements of the method can feel quite overwhelming and de-skilling at first but over the course I felt it came together and there were lots of connections to be made with the work I already do and the knowledge I have. Kim called role playing 'dabbling' to try and make it feel less daunting!

It was very helpful to see video of live sessions from both Kim and others, as well as a very powerful audio recording of a mother and a child talking together, with the mother practicing PACE. What struck me so often in these four days was the moving nature of this intervention and how it can really shift some very stuck and unhelpful patterns of behaviour. It has also helped me feel better equipped to know how to broach some very tricky areas that need to be explored but in a safe way.

I feel I will bring the knowledge I have gained through this course into all my interventions with parents and children and I really recommend DDP training to anyone working in the Social Care area as it has a flexibility be useful in many interventions.

Again, many thanks for this opportunity,

Lesley Naylor

Therapeutic Social Worker