

## **Systemic Psychotherapy Training**

Whilst I had to defer for 1 year, midway through my 2-year Systemic Psychotherapy Training, FPSA were understanding of the implications of Covid on my health and were supportive of my continued training. Without the FPSA grant for financial support I would not have been able to undertake my Systemic Family Psychotherapy Training at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust. I have completed all the required clinical training and other respective modules for my course. Upon receipt of my results and final submission of my research, I will be a qualified Systemic Psychotherapist.

The research element of the course was exploring how school staff consider how their interactions are impacted upon given their own thinking, actions and emotional systems within their school-based relationships. As mental health needs increase for young people I was particularly interested in how front-line professionals within schools, consider using their own positioning within relationships, to help children with their emotional needs, through their own dialogue and actions. Whilst this research process has been challenging, it has been helpful in exploring the systemic emotional experiences, inner dialogue and actions within school-based relationships, as one communicates with another. Exploring emotional systems within systemic psychotherapy practice is perhaps still relatively new but the research lends to further considerations of this topic for schools, families, therapists, organisational policies and practices when working with young people and children.

I have particularly enjoyed applying my learning in my clinic practice whilst working at the Tavistock and Portman CAMHS service where adolescents have acute mental health needs. My team and my supervisor, have challenged me as a therapist. This in turn has helped my therapeutic work and my self-reflexivity. As a result, the adolescents have benefited from a reduction in their mental health presentation e.g. for one adolescent, the presenting symptoms were self-harm, anxiety and depression. I presented my clinical work as part of my Viva where I positively received my results and feedback for the work conducted given the improved relationship within their family and reduced emotional distress. As a result of the live supervision, feedback from my team and by me supporting and learning from them, I have further developed my systemic therapeutic techniques. This has helped to build my confidence and improve my practice overall. I have been able to apply my learning and use the skills within my day-to-day work with children and adolescents with various mental health needs.

In view of my learning, I have also been able to apply theory to practice and have been delivering some systemic training for schools in the past two years. Whilst my learning journey continues, I now also look forward to my new CAMHS and fostering, Systemic Psychotherapist/Family Therapist roles, to help adolescents and children with their mental health needs. I could not have proceeded with this, without the FPSA funding. This training, my professional and personal values will continue to help me strengthen relationships between young people, their care givers and supporting professionals by helping them to understand how behaviours and their respective context, can negatively impact on mental health needs.