

## **Systemic Family Therapy Pg Cert Year 1**

Without funding from PDSA I would not have been able to complete the first year of the Family Systemic Therapy Post Graduate Certificate to support me in delivering interventions to families and young teenage individuals to help with their mental health.

### **The Course**

Systems theory developed my understanding of how the systems around adolescent affects their mental health. This includes the family system, the school system and any support system. In addition, I developed an alternative perspective on how the young person relates to his or her own mental health concerns.

As well as gaining a systemic a perspective, I also developed skills and learnt of new interventions to use with families to help them to change their perspectives on the young person and their presenting difficulties and their own actions in relation.

### **Background of the young people my work influences**

I am the wellbeing coordinator and senior Psychotherapist based at a SEN School. I support four Therapists, two therapy assistants overseeing a caseload of 70 young people. I report to the senior leadership team and have ability to influence the systems of the school and to develop therapeutic approach of a staff team of 99 staff members managing 106 pupils with Special Educational and Mental Health needs.

### **Impact of my learning**

My newly gained understanding of systems theory enabled me to identify a wider range of areas that affect young person as opposed to focusing solely on support for the young person in isolation to their family and school. The knowledge of interventions to use enabled me to work confidently with the family in therapy sessions and in how to change the school system to help the young person to take positive strides with their well-being over all.

### **Outcomes**

I have implemented changes to how staff gained support and the behaviour systems they use. I used my knowledge gained from Systems Theoretical viewpoints to review how the pastoral and teaching support teams worked with each other and made suggestions to edit the behaviour management system to promote mental health support instead or reinforcing behaviour.

I delivered training to staff training on systems theory and provided consultations with staff aiding their learning of feedback loops reflecting on the way the staff member was approaches the young person linked with the pupils experience from their family system

The skills and interventions allowed me to work with families in therapy, I was able to provide family therapy to pupils who had presented with limiting behaviours and mental health difficulties for around five years.

2For example, I supported family of a 13-year-old boy who presented with anxiety and low self-esteem; who would have melt downs in busy environments and self-deprecate when upset and struggling to learn. We have seen a growth in his independence and willingness to try new experiences and reduction in anxious / avoidant responses, having a positive self-concept and managing in busy new environments. The change in his parent's perspective and approach alongside the change of his school system caused a change within him.