

Intermediate Systemic Course – Postgraduate Certificate

I have recently completed the D4 Intermediate Systemic Course (Systemic approaches to working with individuals, families and organisations) with The Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust. The course commenced in October 2022 and finished in June 2023. I was awarded a postgraduate certificate with distinction. Prior to the course I have completed an MA in Dramatherapy and am currently employed as a clinical specialist in an NHS Trust working in CAMHS. This course has allowed me to build on previous creative therapies, CBT and DBT experience in order to support young people and their families. The course has allowed me to bring further nuance to my relationships with families and their wider systems including schools, health providers and social care. I feel very fortunate that the funding from FPSA has afforded me the opportunity to complete the training and I hope in the future to go on and complete my MA in Systemic Psychotherapy.

This systemic training builds on a previous foundation course which teaches on the main systemic theoretical practices as well as how to put these into practice with different client groups. There are focuses on reflexivity, issues of heteronormativity in therapeutic practice, systems theory located in larger organisations and emerging areas of practice and research. The course aims to support putting theory into practice and comprises of theoretical essays as well as practical components and required 60 hours of systemic practice to be carried out with families of a minimum of 2 generations. This aspect of the course was particularly useful for my work context as I was able to offer family sessions and extended assessments as well as consultation with wider networks to ensure a more holistic intervention for young people and their families. An increased understanding of relational patterns, impact of generational trauma and knowledge-based evidence has been crucial in supporting my work with young people with complex and enduring mental health conditions; often these issues are compounded by safeguarding issues which require parallel support.

My experience of the course following my foundation study has been very positive and I have enjoyed the chance to meet with my peers and tutor group face to face following a year of online study. Building on my previous knowledge of theoretical concepts and with the support of a systemic supervisor for the practical therapeutic aspects of the course has allowed me to grow in confidence as a systemic practitioner. Completing clinical logs and personal reflective diaries throughout the course has allowed me to chart my progress and application as a therapist. My understanding of systems theory has also had a positive impact on my relationship with my colleagues and has been supportive in challenging/growing as a team in our multi-disciplinary meetings. I am fortunate to now be part of my service's systemic team and work within a family therapy clinic offering systemic interventions with a reflecting teams to multiple families within our service. I feel I have grown both professionally and personally as a result of the course and would encourage others considering applying to do so in order to further consolidate any learning or interest they may have gained on the foundation course.