

Motivational Interviewing and Mentalization course

I am a Registered and Chartered Forensic Psychologist working within a Youth Justice Service. My role complex and varied but includes having to complete specialised assessments and then provide appropriate intervention, or to signpost/refer to other specialist services as appropriate.

I was given a grant from the FPSA to attend the Motivational Interviewing and Mentalization course facilitated by the Anna Freud centre over two days in September 2023.

The course was delivered online, using Zoom, on 14th and 15th September 2023. The facilitators were Gema Hadridge and James Fairbairn. This was a convenient way for me to attend high quality and relevant training as usually courses of this nature are in London or further afield. Being able to access training online reduces travel and accommodation expenses.

There were excellent opportunities throughout the two days of training to think about ourselves as practitioners and how we use mentalization skills in our day to day work. I also felt that all aspects of using motivational interviewing techniques were covered in good depth. Plenty of opportunities to role play using the skills were offered through 'break out rooms' on zoom. The training delivery felt well-paced and reflective. I now feel considerably more confident in being able to use motivational interviewing skills in order to engage hard to reach children and adolescents in my service.

Going forward, I confident that I will be using mentalization and motivational interviewing approaches with adolescents and their families. I imagine these skills will be particularly useful in cases where there is history of trauma and maltreatment, such as in looked after and adopted young people. I am very grateful to the FPSA for giving me the opportunity to complete this course, and I am sure this training will have a massive impact on my future practice in working with young people in our service.