

FPSA Impact Statement – Intermediate Certificate in Systemic Therapy – Child Focused Practiced

I have just concluded the Intermediate Child Focused Systemic Course with the Institute of Family Therapy, which was one academic year running from September 2023 – June 2024.

Prior to the course I had completed an MA in Social Work and am currently working in a local authority with children in care and those transitioning into independence. Much of my work focuses on making sure the young person's needs are met holistically by different teams and enabling the young people to be prepared for their transition into independence and life post care.

Having trained in systemic practice before I felt as though I had a good base knowledge to work from and would also notice how much systemic thinking informed my approach and intervention for cases. I felt it was natural for me to work this way and I believe it has contributed towards greater outcomes for the children and families we work with. When there was a chance to not only refresh this knowledge but to take it further studying at intermediate level, I was very keen to try and do so. I applied at the Institute of Family Therapy and was successful in gaining a place on the course!

The course aims are to:

- Extend our knowledge with children in specific contexts such as court related work and children looked after by the state.
- Allow participants opportunities to reflect upon practice.
- Help participants increase and consolidate our theoretical and clinical skills and understanding of the use of the self in practice.
- Encourages participants to broaden our range of interventions in family and other related contexts in which they have a professional role.
- Encourage a critical approach to theory and practice in the light of inequalities and differences of race, class, and gender.
- Encourage an anti-discriminatory approach to working with clients.

Throughout the year my knowledge and experienced have been enhanced via lectures, discussions, tutor groups, and guest speakers. I completed assignments that focused on both theoretical understanding and demonstrations of skills in practice, this was accompanied by completing 60 clinical hours with children and families and 10 hours of clinical supervision. The course also involved submitting a portfolio that looks at our reflections throughout the year, again promoting understanding of self and self-reflexivity.

My understanding of generational trauma, relational patterns, feedback loops and relationships within families has enhanced significantly. Having knowledge-based evidence has been crucial in supporting the young people and their families with safeguarding issues.

My understanding of systems theory has also had a positive impact on my relationship with my colleagues and has been the driving force behind me now supporting other teams in systemic interventions and conversations while also rolling out compassionate mind training for the staff in the local authority.

The impact of this learning has not only enhanced working systematically but also my understanding and application of the theoretical unpinning learned throughout the year. This has had a huge impact

on my relationship building within my role and enhanced my practice as a manager as it encourages compassionate practice. I have grown as a person and the focus on our individual social graces enables us to think about what we bring to the role as a therapist but also to all situations as a person.

It is important to note that had I not received most of the funding from FPSA this opportunity would not have been available to me. I would not be able to complete this course despite support from friends, family and even my workplace.

Moving forward I will not be pursuing the MA in Psychotherapy, but the skills gained on this course will continue to enhance my practice in my current role and give me the foundation needed to explore roles as an in-house clinician for my local authority. I cannot thank FPSA enough and look forward to keeping them up to date with my professional and personal journey!