

MSc Year 1 – King’s College London – From September 2023 – September 2024

Specialist Practitioner and Social Worker, Trainee Family Therapist

I am deeply grateful for the funding I received from FPSA, which has been essential in allowing me to progress into the qualifying years of my MSc in Family Therapy at King’s College London. Without this support, I wouldn’t have been able to continue my studies.

Throughout the course, I have completed a trainee placement within a complex adolescents’ service at CAMHS, alongside my role as a senior social worker in Family and Children’s Services. The program has provided a rich and varied learning experience. In addition to completing 150 hours of clinical work within my organization, I have also spent 40 hours as the lead therapist at CAMHS.

The teaching has significantly deepened my understanding of various family therapy models, including the Milan approach, Narrative Therapy, and Structural and Strategic Family Therapy. A strong focus has been placed on social constructionism, race, culture, and diversity, which has helped integrate theory and practice.

This has not only enhanced my therapeutic skills but also boosted my confidence in exploring children’s and young people’s mental health issues within broader social and societal contexts.

A key component of my training has been developing self-reflexivity, encouraging me to reflect on my own beliefs, assumptions, and biases, and how they influence the therapeutic process. This reflective practice has been invaluable in considering the wider contexts that children and families bring into therapy. As a result, I’ve gained both a deeper theoretical understanding and greater self-awareness in my clinical work.

I have also focussed on Attachment based family therapy and supported parents to have a more containing and connected response in relation to their children’s depression. Without the training on the course in this type of family therapy, I might not have been able to support such results.

During my clinical placement, I also participated in weekly group supervision using a Reflecting Team model. Although this strengths-based approach has been challenging at times, it has been incredibly beneficial for my growth as a therapist.

The model offers multiple perspectives to both the therapist and the family, allowing families to engage with ideas that resonate with them the most. It has also helped me develop a more nuanced understanding of the issues at hand, while considering factors such as gender, ethnicity, and ability.

In both my placement and my work with children and families, I have encountered many young people dealing with challenging social situations that significantly affect their mental health. Using a systemic approach has allowed me to view these issues in a relational context, rather than focusing solely on the child or parent / their other family members.

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By incorporating Narrative Therapy techniques, I've been able to co-create alternative narratives with children and their families, helping young people and families reframe difficulties and find "unique outcomes" rather than focussing on negative self stories.

Many thanks for FSPA's support In my journey of becoming a Systemic Family Therapist. It has truly supported me to support others.

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