

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) – Level 2 training May 2013

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank FPSA for their generous funding to complete the level 2 training in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP). The course was a four-day programme run at Family Futures in London and offers training in an approach that has been developed for working with young people who have been traumatised and have attachment difficulties. DDP builds on the foundations of attachment theory as well as bringing in more current advances in neuroscience and psychology to inform how to work with children who have such difficulties, using their current relationships as a means of building more positive attachments and allowing them to develop a sense of safety in order to process their past trauma. This is particularly relevant in my clinical work as a psychologist working in a Looked After Children Service within CAMHS. DDP uses a principle model of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy) in order to achieve its goals and exists as a treatment that comes highly recommended for use with children in the care system. It also sits comfortably alongside other attachment-focused therapies, including Theraplay, which are practiced by myself within the CAMHS CLA service.

The structure of the training programme followed one of being given opportunities for live peer supervision from a group of trainees who have completed level 1 DDP training and are practicing the principles of the approach in fields ranging from educational settings, through social care and health services. It also offered the opportunity for individual supervision provided by Dan Hughes, founder of the DDP approach, as we were invited to showcase some of our clinical work using the principles learnt in the level 1 training. This opportunity was taken up by myself and provided invaluable advice and ideas to inform my future clinical work. It also confirmed that I am practicing the principles to a sufficient level to warrant applying to become accredited in DDP which requires on-going supervision from a consultant in DDP to ensure my skills continue to develop in a way that fits within this approach. This is an opportunity I am now keen to explore. The training also offered opportunities for new learning from Dan Hughes in relation to advances within the fields of Neuroscience and Psychology and how this provides an evidence base for the effectiveness of using DDP. Examples of work executed by Dan and other more established DDP practitioners were also shared as a learning experience and as well as discussions and teaching on some themes that come out of applying DDP. These include the ideas of Blocked Care (where our own parenting experiences and histories impact on us when we become parents) and examining our own attachment histories when thinking about what we bring into a room whilst we are carrying out therapeutic work with young people.

Completion of the training has enabled me to build on the foundation knowledge and skills that I developed through completion of the level 1 training and will firmly enhance my clinical practice in the future as I will be able to utilize these more advanced skills when working with the children and young people in our service. It is an approach that I am actively building into my core clinical work and, as such, the learning through this training will be used on a daily basis with all the young people I work with or alongside. I am greatly enthused by the approach and the effectiveness of it with these young people and look forward to putting into practice the new learning from this training and the accreditation process that will hopefully ensue. Without the funding from FPSA, attendance at this training would not have been possible and so for this I am hugely grateful and appreciative.

Regards

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