

## **Neuro-Physiological Psychotherapy – Level 1 (12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014). Family Futures**

I would like to firstly take this opportunity to thank the FPSA for their funding which enabled me to complete Level 1 training in Neuro-Physiological Psychotherapy (NPP) - a 5 day course run at Family Futures in London. NPP describes a Neuro-Sequential Approach to therapeutic work with children and young people who have experienced Developmental Trauma.

NPP works in three phases, beginning with Regulation and Safety, moving on to Supporting attachment and understanding of the child's inner world, and finally into Life story work. The premise being that each area works as a parallel to the development of the human brain – from Primitive (survival) to Limbic (emotional / relational) to Neo-cortex (thinking / cognitive processing). This Level 1 course provides a framework of theory, evidence, and practice-based experiential learning. The course structure for Level 1 offers teaching from a number of Family Futures staff from different professional backgrounds (including Therapists, Social Workers, Somatic Experience Practitioner, Occupational Therapist and Psychologist), each leading particular areas of the course. Their wide ranging knowledge of theory, and use of personal and practice examples really enriched the course content for me.

Day 1 took participants through The Development of the Brain and Central Nervous System, contextualised in terms of the differences for those who have experienced trauma, and – in particular – Developmental Trauma.

Day 2 focused on the Impact of Trauma on Physiological, Emotional and Cognitive Development of Children – From Neurons to Nurture.

Day 3 allowed for an insight into Therapeutic Assessment of Traumatized children, and enabled us to look at the benefits and uses of a variety of Qualitative and Quantitative assessment tools.

Day 4's learning focused on an Introduction to Sensory Integration Therapy, and the world of Schools and Education for Traumatized Children. Here we were given a great deal of strategies for regulation of children, and of the need to support schools in their work with traumatized children.

Day 5 looked at the power of touch, and the importance of touch in regard to overall development, as well as consolidating the learning from the week, and offering chance for individual case discussion and consultation – thinking about applying the NPP approach to our own practice and case work.

Each day flowed comfortably into the next, with a chance to build on previous learning, and truly *feel* – as well as understand – the importance of a Neuro-Sequential Approach to therapeutic support for children and families.

Whilst Family Futures' main role is around support for children in adoptive placements, I feel that this approach is easily transferable to all children and families in need of emotional

and therapeutic support around attachment, whether they be adopted, fostered, or living with birth families.

I found the whole course fascinating, insightful and inspiring. It offered me more than I was expecting in terms of experiential tools to apply directly in my work, the importance of self-care of yourself as a therapist when undertaking therapeutic work, and the importance and positive results of taking a Neuro-sequential approach to working with children and families. It has also inspired me to share my learning with colleagues, young people, and families.

I would highly recommend this course to anyone working therapeutically with children and young people, particularly those working with children who may have been traumatised by their early experiences and attachments.

Without the funding from the FPSA I would not have been able to attend this course, and I am incredibly grateful for this opportunity. I have shared the positive work that the FPSA do with my colleagues, as well as sharing my personal experience of your support, and my gratitude.

Best Wishes and Many Thanks,

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