

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) Level 2. April 2016  
Kingston, Ontario. Canada

Firstly, I want to offer my most sincere thanks to FPSA for supporting me to complete level 2 of the DDP training. Having just began starting up my own private therapy practice, it felt such a valuable experience to engage within meaningful training once again. The use of DDP within my practice supports the work I do with some of the most, vulnerable, abused and neglected children and young people within society. The model not only supports me as a therapist, but enables parents and caregivers to work alongside me to provide effective therapeutic sessions for children & young people to explore, understand and emotionally integrate their traumatic life experiences.

There are a number of reports already written about the DDP Module that I do not wish to repeat. However, having undertaken the training course in Canada, I wanted to share my experience of being part of this worldwide model of therapeutic support. Dr Sian Phillips is both a Psychologist and a lecturer at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. Sian has worked closely with Dan Hughes, the founder of DDP and delivered an amazing and informative training experience to a group of us who worked with children, young people and their families who are either fostered, in residential care or are adopted.

As the course unfolded, we discovered the similarities and differences these families experienced in caring for abused and traumatised children. We shared our own practices, showing our strengths and vulnerabilities and areas where we continue to grow therapeutically to offer the best support that we can.

One commonality with our two continents was the lack of funding for families to access therapeutic support and for professionals to complete training to offer unique therapeutic services outside of CAMHS or Child Welfare. However, our individual and collative drive, passion and compassion to offer the most effective therapeutic support that we can was where we all found common and solid ground.

During my stay in Canada with my peers on the course, I became an honouree member of the DDP Network Canada. I made the most amazing friendships and gained much needed peer support. My train journeys between Toronto and Kingston took me alongside Lake Ontario. The width, depth and vastness of the lake, somehow reminded me of this within me. At the time of the course, I felt emotionally vulnerable within myself, but somehow the travel, course, peers and connection to what we all need to help soothe and heal our painful life experiences, was revived within me. No doubt I continue to bring the powerfulness and yet the tranquillity from the DDP model and from the great lake into my therapeutic practice to this present day.

I have yet to work towards accreditation, but it's my next step!

Once again, I offer my most humble thanks to FPSA for this opportunity.

Warm regards

Anita Smith

Child Psychotherapeutic Counsellor.