

Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy at Derby University

On the 1st of August 2019 I completed Year 1 of the Post Graduate Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy at Derby University (Kedleston Road site). I undertook approximately 301 hours of teaching, 20.5 hours of clinical supervision and over 40 hours of clinical practice.

Currently I work within the Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Leicester as a Developmental Primary Mental Health Worker and for the Post/Pre-trial Sexual Abuse Service at Family Action. I am a qualified social worker and have also undertaken the two-year Diploma in Systemic Thinking and Practice at Derby University.

I am extremely grateful for the funding I received to undertake the course, which for many years has been of particular interest to me.

On reflection as a single parent I found completing the course to be a very challenging experience. However, the learning that I have gained has been absolutely invaluable. It has enabled me to undertake concise assessments using a CBT approach including developing formulations which are collaboratively shared with children and their families. By exploring current strengths and difficulties I have been able to work with children to identify short concise goals which they gradually work towards using CBT techniques.

Through the use of case studies, I have learnt how to apply techniques such as exposure, behavioural experiments, and thoughts records to challenge unhelpful thoughts and beliefs. For example, I undertook some work with a young person who set herself the task of trying to manage her anxiety when attending a concert. By challenging her thoughts and using relaxation techniques she was able to successfully manage the situation leading her to set further goals for herself.

The idea of recording sessions with clients, whilst technically challenging, also enabled me to review my practice during supervision and support a client experiencing social anxiety challenge negative thoughts about how he perceived himself. In addition to this using the idea of agenda setting has encouraged me to manage time better within the session by supporting the client to remain focused on their goals and thereby avoiding drift which was a challenge for me prior to attending the course.

Following completion of the course I have thought about undertaking the second year of the Diploma to increase my understanding of other mental health disorders and how to effectively support young people using this evidenced based intervention.

Finally, I would like to thank the Foundation for Professionals in Services for Adolescence for the funding and opportunity to support young people and their families with the knowledge I have acquired.