

## **MSc Systemic Psychotherapy**

I have received funding towards the first year of the MSc in Systemic Psychotherapy, this took place between September 2022 and July 2023 at the Birmingham Women and Children's Hospital. This has been one day a week for the year, with a mixture of online and in person teaching and practice. As part of the course and the Association of Family Therapy guidelines I have been live supervised as part of the clinical element of the course. I am currently in the final year of the training.

I have been qualified as a social worker for 20 years and have worked across a variety of settings, including statutory children and families social work, voluntary sector and Children and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHs). I currently work in a community CAMHs team, where young people have social care involvement and are experiencing mental health difficulties. I self-funded the first two years of family therapy training, as I am passionate about working with families. This funding has allowed me to access the final qualifying years of the training, which have been a huge benefit to my practice with children, young people and their families.

The first year of the course has helped me to develop personally and professionally. I have developed my confidence as a practitioner and increased my relational reflectivity with the families that I work with.

During the first year of the MSc, I have expanded my knowledge on understanding diversity and how that influences the relationships of individuals, families and systems. We have spent time considering Social GgRRAAACCEEESS (Burnham 2012) in relationship to our own diversity and that of the family/systems that we work with. This has helped to understand and co-create a culture of therapy for families, using systemic skills to use different techniques such as the use of genograms/relationship maps, systemic questions, externalising and sculpting. I have had some experience of a reflecting team, but the clinical practice has developed new skills in using the reflecting team to support the family in change. My ethical practice has developed, thinking about my ethical position personally and professionally in the actions and interactions with family.

As part of the course I have to complete 100 hours of systemic work with families per year, I have established a systemic clinic with a colleague in my place of work, which was previously unavailable, opening up a much-needed resource. I have also been able to use my new knowledge and skills to support the social workers that I work with to implement systemic ideas in their practice. I have also supported the organisations I work within to consider systemic ideas when agencies can become polarised in their practice. As I start the final year of training I would like to extend by practice as a Family Therapist further by working in the community and making family therapy more accessible.

As a social worker I would definitely recommend systemic training to develop skills and ideas to support families. I have been passionately sharing my learning with colleagues.

Thank you for the funding.