

Training Evaluation Report

Title: Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) Level One

Venue: Adoption Plus, Moulsoe Business Centre, Moulsoe, Nr. Milton Keynes, MK16 0FJ

Date: 19 – 22 March 2024

Length: 28 hours/ 4 days

Trainer: Vicky Sutton

Certification: Dyadic Developmental Practice, Psychotherapy & Parenting - Level One

Applicant qualifications: BA Fine Art, MA Art Psychotherapy

Applicant Professional Role: Art Psychotherapist, BAAT and HSPC registered

Summary of the Training:

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy is an attachment-focused approach developed by Dan Hughes to meet the needs of children who have experienced relational and developmental trauma and loss. The Level One training, led by Clinical Psychologist and DDP Practitioner Vicky Sutton, provided a well-structured introduction to essential DDP concepts including PACE, safety, intersubjectivity, reciprocal relationships, polyvagal theory, attachment history, and the role of the parent in supporting their child. Level One serves as the initial step towards certification as a DDP therapist or practitioner.

Vicky used various tools such as PowerPoint presentations, training videos, recorded therapy sessions, experiential role plays, and discussion to create an interactive, enriching, and engaging learning environment which deepened my understanding of core principles and the broader therapeutic framework. Observing Vicky's work in recorded sessions provided firsthand experience of the approach, while daily role plays helped hone PACE skills, ensuring a comprehensive and practical understanding of how to apply the framework in my own practice. Vicky's professional experience and her warm, gentle and inclusive manner fostered a sense of safety and comfort within the group, encouraging open dialogue, reflection and active participation.

My Experience of the Training:

One of the most valuable aspects of the training for me was the opportunity to reflect on our own practice and personal experiences and integrate them into the learning process. Training together in-person over an extended period, alongside colleagues from a variety of backgrounds, was enriching and inspiring, deepening my understanding of the wider support system surrounding young people and my professional role within it.

Since completing the DDP training I have been keen to integrate the DDP framework into my art psychotherapy practice and group work. I am consciously moving away from a solution-based approach to embracing the PACE principles of intersubjective connection, curiosity, and empathy. The training has refocused my view of what a therapeutic relationship entails, resulting in more effective support for the young people and adults I work with. I anticipate that this training will be invaluable for my ongoing professional development and my planned future engagement with the local foster community. Recognising that this is just the beginning of my DDP journey, I am keen to continue to learn and enhance my skills in the future. This training has undoubtedly equipped me with invaluable tools and insights and I would highly recommend it to anyone working with children, young people, carers and parents, particularly those who have experienced developmental trauma.

The funding provided by FPSA for this course has been greatly appreciated, and I would like to say a sincere thank you to all involved for making this fantastic learning opportunity possible.