

MA Family and Systemic Psychotherapy at the Tavistock

Year One: September 2024 – July 2025

I am so grateful to the FPSA for providing this grant towards my studies, it has been a wonderful journey towards becoming a qualified Systemic Psychotherapist.

The first year of the MA in Family and Systemic Psychotherapy at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust provided a rich foundation in systemic theory and practice. The training aimed to deepen our theoretical understanding, develop clinical skills, and foster critical reflexivity in relation to systems, culture, and context. A key focus was the integration of systemic into our existing clinical roles.

The teaching was delivered by an experienced team of systemic psychotherapists as well as our notable guest speakers such as John Burnham, Britt Krause & Ged Smith. Sessions included formal teaching, experiential exercises, and live supervision. The course incorporated approaches from structural, narrative, Milan, and dialogical models, with strong emphasis on social constructionism and our embodied response/ process.

Key areas of study included; foundational systemic concepts (circularity, neutrality, hypothesizing). Genogram construction and systemic interviewing. Cultural and contextual awareness in therapy. The impact of power, language, and difference. Systemic consultation and reflective practice.

My learning was supported by small peer groups, process groups, and live supervision, allowing for practical application of skills in real-time and collaborative reflection on professional identity and positioning.

This first year of training has been both intellectually stimulating and professionally transformative. The balance between theoretical teaching and practical application made the learning deeply relevant to my current role as a systemic practitioner in CAMHS. The integration of systemic thinking has enhanced my clinical practice, enabling more collaborative and holistic ways of working with families and professional networks.

This course has been invaluable for my further development as a clinician in CAMHS. My colleagues and service as a whole have benefited from the deepened understanding, clarity, consultation and support I have been able to give through my continued learning on the course.

As I move into the second year of training, I intend to further embed systemic practice within my CAMHS team, contribute to systemic service development, and continue offering family-focused interventions. Long-term, I aim to qualify as a Family and Systemic Psychotherapist and contribute to supervision and teaching within CAMHS and beyond. I also have a qualifying role, as a band 7 pending my completion of the second year.

I would strongly recommend this training to any clinician working with families or in multidisciplinary mental health settings. It is a fantastic way to further your career development.

I hope that the FPSA can continue to offer this grant as it has been such an immense help to me.

BSc, MSc, Systemic Practitioner in EAST Hertfordshire CAMHS