

MSc-equivalent training in Systemic Psychotherapy

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the FSPA Foundation for supporting me through the first year of my MSc-equivalent training in Systemic Psychotherapy. This opportunity has been genuinely transformative, both in terms of my professional development and the impact it has had on the young people and families I work with. Balancing study with frontline practice in both social care and CAMHS has been demanding, but the learning has been deeply enriching and immediately applicable.

Over the past year, I've immersed myself in systemic theory and practice, learning to view families and relationships through a wider lens. Concepts like circular causality, relational dynamics, and second-order thinking have shifted how I understand the challenges young people face. I've developed my practical tools—such as circular questioning, reframing, and genogram work—that have helped me engage families in more meaningful conversations. These approaches have allowed me to move away from problem-focused narratives and instead support families in identifying strengths, patterns, and possibilities for change.

One of the most powerful aspects of the training has been the emphasis on reflexivity. I've become more aware of my own position within the systems I work in, and how my interactions can influence outcomes. This has helped me build stronger, more collaborative relationships with families, and has also enhanced my contributions to multi-agency teams. I've found myself offering systemic perspectives during case discussions, which has led to more holistic and thoughtful care planning.

The impact on my practice has been clear. In CAMHS, I've used systemic approaches to support young people experiencing anxiety, low mood, suicidal ideations, early psychosis, and family conflict. These tools have helped me facilitate conversations that bring families together, reduce blame, and open up new ways of understanding each other. In social care, I've worked with families navigating complex challenges, and systemic thinking has helped me hold hope and curiosity in situations that might otherwise feel stuck. I've seen how small shifts in perspective can lead to meaningful change.

As I look ahead to the second year of the course, I'm excited to deepen my clinical practice and continue building confidence in applying systemic approaches with families. I hope to refine my therapeutic skills through more complex casework and supervision, and to explore how systemic thinking can be used to support young people experiencing distress in increasingly nuanced ways. I'm particularly looking forward to undertaking a research project that connects theory with the realities of frontline work. My aim is to not only grow as a practitioner but also to contribute meaningfully to the teams I work with—sharing learning, supporting reflective spaces, and helping shape services that are more relational, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of young people and their families.

This training has already made a significant difference in how I work, and I know it will continue to shape my practice in the years to come. I'm incredibly grateful to the FSPA Foundation for making this possible. Your support has not only invested in my development, but in the wellbeing of the families and young people I have the privilege of working with.