

MASTERS IN
Systemic Psychotherapy

TRAINING
PROGRAMMES

OCTOBER 2011

Ref. M6



This two-year programme is offered by the Tavistock Clinic in conjunction with the University of East London and is intended for experienced practitioners who wish to become qualified systemic/family psychotherapists and systemic teachers. Successful completion of the coursework leads to a Masters of Systemic Psychotherapy degree (MSysPsych) awarded by the University of East London and eligibility for registration as a systemic psychotherapist by the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). The course is organised into weekly clinical supervision groups and monthly study blocks of two days per month.

This was the first family therapy training course in the UK and has been running continuously since 1975

Clinical Supervision

Each trainee is assigned to a clinical supervision group consisting of a staff supervisor and 4 trainees who meet for 4-5 hours per week over 4 terms. Additionally the same groups will have two, 3 hour meetings per term for personal and professional development.

Academic Teaching

The academic component of the course is organised into two day blocks which will take place once a month at the Tavistock Clinic on Thursday and Friday. Additionally there will be half a week's study block at the Tavistock Clinic at the beginning of the first year, and a 2-day residential block is planned for the beginning of the second year.

Assessment

1. Assessment of academic work consists of:
 - a. Theoretical paper: 3,500 words
 - b. Research essay: 3,500 words
 - c. Dissertation
2. Assessment of clinical work is done on the basis of:
 - a. Supervisors report based on continuous assessment and a trainees self assessment. Years 1 and 2.
 - b. Presentation of taped material to a panel at the end of years 1 and 2.

Course Component

Clinical Work

The aim of the clinical work is to train course members to use a range of therapeutic approaches, based on systemic principles, with individuals, couples and, primarily, families. Trainees acquire an understanding of the entire treatment process from referral to termination and are able to apply their skills to a variety of work settings within the public sector. Trainees will learn models for conceptualising presenting problems, specific skills for conducting systemic psychotherapy, and an awareness of how their own experiences affect their work with clients. There is an emphasis on understanding the impact of gender, race, culture and sexual orientation on individuals, families and the process of therapy.

Trainees will work within a CAMHS setting, taking on a range of referrals and presenting problems, including child sexual, physical and emotional abuse. In all settings, trainees will work with different family constellations, including couples work and work with individuals where appropriate. There is an expectation that all trainees will work with at least one family of a different culture or ethnic group to themselves. In term 2, year 2, students go on placement in pairs to primary care or other settings and return once a month to their supervision group, for supervision.

Supervision of Agency Work

The aim of the work is to enable the development of trainee's skills in their work place and to think about the effect of their training and development on relationships within their agency, to provide consultation to students about dilemmas and issues from their work context, to highlight values and knowledge-bases and develop their practice to counter the impact of discrimination of all kinds and to be able to think systemically about their work tasks and be able to involve wider systems where appropriate. There is one meeting during the course to which managers from trainees' agencies are invited.

Theoretical Seminars

The aim is to consider and extend trainees understanding of the development of theoretical concepts in the systemic psychotherapy field, including family, couple and individual work, and to study the new and emerging theoretical concepts in the field. The aim is also to provide trainees with conceptual tools which they can use to develop their practice, and an ability to criticise and adapt theory.

Trainees will be expected to have a clear understanding of the theoretical concepts underpinning the systemic approaches as well as the development of the ideas, and be able to articulate the current dilemmas in the field. They will need to apply these ideas and concepts to their clinical practice and their understanding of themselves in their agency setting.

Teaching will take place in lectures and workshops as well as in smaller tutorial groups where trainees will be expected to discuss relevant theoretical papers.

Personal and Professional Development

Personal and professional development is explored by focusing on the role of a therapist and the way personal development and different settings affect therapeutic work. The contribution of culture, race, gender are examined in detail.

In small groups, trainees will be invited to consider their work in the light of their own beliefs, value systems and experience.

Research Teaching

Research is an increasingly valued aspect of Systemic work. The aim of the research seminars is to help trainees develop a research 'frame of mind'. They will be introduced to quantitative and qualitative research paradigms and become familiar with a number of basic research methods. They will consider a range of methodological and ethical issues that arise in designing research that addresses clinical problems, and gain first-hand experience of writing a research proposal.

Course participants will also carry out a systematic electronic literature search and learn to critically review a range of published research studies in relation to a research question, using a systemic framework. They will be encouraged to reflect on the way research findings can be utilised in their clinical work.

The final Dissertation (handed in at the end of the course) will be selected from two options: a research portfolio to include a literature review, a critical analysis essay and a research proposal or an independent research project.

Teaching Practice

Trainees are expected to provide a small piece of teaching or training for other professionals in systemic thinking and practice. Settings may vary from project teams, for single agency settings or multi-agency, multidisciplinary groups.

Trainees will be facilitated and supervised as they conduct the negotiation process to set up the course, to develop a curriculum to fit the needs of their course participants and teach the course.

Tutorials

In addition to the tutorial groups, which will have a primarily academic function, all course members are allocated an individual tutor. The aim is to support the trainee in all aspects of their learning on the course and to review any problems or obstacles to course participation that maybe encountered.

The following events are part of the training:

Introductory Event

This is a three day introductory event which explores the experiences of beginning a training at the Tavistock Clinic.

Inter-disciplinary Events

These are training days held in the Child and Family Department for trainees on all clinical courses. They examine joint issues such as race, gender and the law which are relevant for professional practice.

Admission requirements

Prerequisites for applicants to the course:

- i. A university degree or in some cases, an equivalent professional qualification.
- ii. Candidates are normally expected to have a professional qualification in the field of psychiatry, psychotherapy, counselling, educational or clinical psychology, family therapy, nursing, social work, teaching or those who do not have one of the above may apply and will be required to submit a portfolio to evidence their prior learning and experience. For more information on this contact the course administrator
- iii. Successful completion of an introductory and intermediate level course in family therapy and/or systemic approaches.
- iv. Employment or placement in a work setting which enables the applicant to practice systemic psychotherapy while attending the course for at least 100 hours per year. To this end we can help candidates find placements if necessary.
- v. Some systemic supervision in placement or workplace. The course may be able to help arrange this if it is not readily available.

Selection procedure

Each applicant will submit an application form, an essay on a given subject and two references (one of which addresses the candidate's ability to fulfil the academic requirements). Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend a selection day, for a full-day, consisting of an interview, and a role play exercise.

Next selection

The next intake of students will begin their studies in October 2011.

Organising tutors

Kate Daniels and Reenee Singh

Teaching staff

Percy Aggett
Sarah Amoss
Elizabeth Boyd
Laura Glendinning
Carol Halliwell
Julia Granville
Ellie Kavner
John Launer
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FURTHER INFORMATION

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