UNIT 3: Therapeutic Approaches

MODULE: Systemic Practice

Module co-ordinator: Kiki Mastroyanopoulou

2016-17 (2014+15 Cohorts)
Unit: 3. Therapeutic Approaches  
Module: Systemic Practice  
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Aims and learning objectives of the module:

1.1 To be familiar with the basic ideas within systemic theory and practice.

1.2 To be familiar with the history and philosophy of some of the different schools of systemic therapy.

1.3 To be able to incorporate systemic ideas in clinical work even if working predominantly from a different orientation.

1.4 To be able to integrate systemic ideas within the role of the clinical psychologist.

1.5 To be able to apply systemic ideas across developmental and ability levels with individuals, couples, families, carers, and organisations.

1.6 To develop skills in presenting (oral and written) clinical work drawing on systemic ideas.

1.7 To be able to use and apply systemic ideas from the research literature and to consider contributing further to this literature (especially using qualitative methods).

YEAR 2 (2015 Cohort)

1. Application of systemic ideas to clinical practice (half day)
   - Demonstration of systemic practice through presentation of clinical case material. Developing ideas on how to ‘formulate’ within a systemic framework.
   - Able to include some systemic concepts within a case formulation, even when drawing largely on other models.
   - Able to apply knowledge of systemic theory to clinical work, including some use of hypothesising, circular questions and adopting a curious position as therapist.

2. Advanced systemic theory and practice (one day)
   - Introduction to more complex ideas in systemic theory and practice, using different systemic “lenses to explore pieces of clinical material
   - Introduction to ideas of power and reflexivity
   - Introduction to Cronen & Pierce model
   - Using the self as part of the system (2nd order) and applying this to case conceptualisation and formulation
   - Integrating ideas of power and diversity into systemic approaches
3. **Applying systemic ideas to organisations (half day)**
   - Review of basic concepts, the role of the consultant, consultation strategies and eco-maps. Experiential workshop based on trainees’ clinical material
   - Understanding the application of systemic models to working with organisations
   - Developing practical skills in systemic consultation through role play

4. **Working with older adults (half day)**
   - Exploration of systemic ideas when working with older adults.
   - A workshop based session using case material.

5. **Working systemically in learning difficulties (half day)**
   - Working systemically in a learning disabilities context
   - Considering issues of loss in LD and managing them systemically
   - Making the talking therapy accessible to the client group
   - Managing parent’s expectations and experiences of complex professional systems
   - Considering narratives of disability

**YEAR 3: Stream teaching: (2014 Cohort)**

**Learning objectives:**

By the end of the year trainees will have received teaching in the application of systemic approaches to a variety of specialist settings, including work with couples, domestic violence, young children and the use of multi-systemic therapy.

There will be an initial focus on systemic formulation with an emphasis on experiential teaching and using case material to facilitate learning.

**SYS: Formulation 1 & 2 (one day)**

**SYS: Formulation 3 & 4 (one day)**

Two days focusing on systemic formulation. Trainees are given the opportunity to take part in role play and bring their own case examples in order to put systemic ideas into practice with a particular emphasis on formulating from a systemic perspective.

**SYS: Working with couples (half day)**

Technical and process issues in systemic couple therapy.

Using systemic concepts when working with couples

Exploration of concepts of ending, joining and engagement, enactment and family life-space techniques. Issues of gender.

**SYS: Working with domestic violence in families 1 and 2 (two half days)**

-Familiarity with key issues involved in domestic violence and consideration of systemic ways of working with this client group.
The effects of domestic violence on children and implications for attachment relationships.

- Questions to ask if domestic violence is suspected

SYS: Working with Children in Systemic Practice (half day)
- Making a connection – power and authenticity
- Child focussed questioning
- Hearing the child’s voice in the family story
- Making use of the child (and therapist’s) creativity
- Use of stories and metaphors
- Working systemically with individual children

SYS: Multi-systemic therapy (half day)
- To gain an overview of MST development
- An understanding of EBCI’s and how they fit into the overall development of Family & Systemic Psychotherapy within the UK.
- Explore links between EBCI’s and the commissioning of Services for Looked After Children & those on the ‘Edge of Care’.
- Discussion re MTFC-A/C locally
- Introduction to the Compass Innovations Project (Dfe).

Learning objectives:

Over the course of the third year case discussion groups trainees will be given opportunities to experience and practice a number of systemic techniques through discussion of their own case material.

By the end of the year they will have gained experience in the following:

Systemic hypothesising, circular questioning, mapping systems and use of genograms (including their own), the use of reflecting teams and using role play and enactments to bring about change.

Year 1 curriculum for 2016 intake is being revised in line with the curriculum update. These details are for information only.

YEAR 1 (Historical – for information only)

6. Introduction to systemic therapy (one day)
- Exploration of key systemic practice concepts (circularity, neutrality and hypothesising).
- Experiential exercises will be used to demonstrate key ideas
- Practice and role play to learn skills in interviewing more than one person, including use of circular questions

7. Systemic practice workshop 1: Introduction to systemic theory and school of systemic therapy (one day)
- An introduction to the main schools of systemic therapy (structural, strategic, Milan systemic, post-modern)
Application of systemic concepts such as hypothesising, circularity, neutrality and curiosity

8. Systemic practice workshop 2: working with reconstituted families (one day)
- Exploration of generational and reconstituted family issues using systemic ideas. Demonstration of use of reflecting team.
- Applying systemic concepts to child, adolescent and family context.
- Using systemic ideas across generations within families.
- Familiarity with issues associated with reconstituted families.
- Application of systemic ideas such as family scripts, family life cycle.

9. Systemic practice workshop 3: formulation (1 day)
- Demonstrating clinical applications of systemic ideas through case examples from various contexts (e.g. child sexual abuse).
- Specific focus on developing ‘formulations’ within a systemic framework.
- Introduction to key issues involved in child sexual abuse and consideration of systemic ways of working with this client group.
- Using systemic concepts within a case formulation.

Teaching sessions from other modules, which have significant content, related to SYSTEMIC: Solution focused therapy (Paul Fisher)

Additional Learning resources

Trainees will be provided with internet links to a variety of examples of systemic therapy sessions (including Minuchin structural family therapy and the use of circular questioning). They will be asked to notice and comment on the use the systemic approaches used and practice similar techniques through role play (using their own case material).

In addition trainees will be encouraged to bring in session audio recordings of their own systemic work and work together as a supervision group to discuss the material.

Key References:


The teaching on this module will contribute to trainees learning the following standards of proficiency in line with the HCPC (2015) standards:

1. Be able to practice safely and effectively within their scope of practice
2. Be able to practice within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
3. Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement
4. Be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice
5. Be able to practice in a non-discriminatory manner
6. Understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality
7. Be able to communicate effectively

13. Understand the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to their profession
14. Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice