

## **Effective Couples Counselling**

### Aims

To build on existing skills and knowledge and gain confidence in working with couples/relationships.

### Objectives

- Build on existing skills and knowledge.
- Greater understanding of theories and practices relating to relationships.
- Participate in a range of activities.
- Gain a certificate in skills and practice

### Day 1

Introduction to the differences in working with couples and working with individuals.

### Aims

1. Understand what is needed in a contract when working with a couple.
2. Exploration of what individuals bring to a relationship.
3. Understand the meaning of "Relationship Fit"
4. Recap social GRAACES within couple/counsellor relationship.
5. Where do we start when working with a couple.

### Topics

- Setting boundaries in line with BACP guidelines.
- Introduction to theory

### Day 2

Introduce 3 stage model, genograms and working with 3 people in the room.

### Aims

1. To understand the 3 stage model.
2. To understand and practice using genograms as a therapeutic tool.
3. To understand psychological development.
4. Experience dynamics of 3 people in the room.

### Topics

- Introduce Carkhuff/Egan theory.
- Reflection on genograms.
- Interpersonal dynamics with 3 people.
- Recap Erikson's Psychological Stages

## Day 3

### Loss, change, family systems, and pinch/crunch model when working with couples.

#### Aims

1. To recap theories of loss and relate to couples work.
2. To understand how change affects a relationship.
3. To understand family systems
4. To understand the pinch/crunch model.
5. To reflect on how the above theories may affect a relationship.

#### Topics

- Recap stages of grief including Kubler-Ross and Stroebe & Schut Dual Process Model.
- Introduce Wei Chei Chart
- Introduce Burnham's Family Systems theory
- Introduce Crunch Points for Couples – Julia Coles

## Day 4

### Let's talk about sex

#### Aims

1. To understand sex and intimacy.
2. To become familiar with sexual language.
3. To be aware of personal responses and barriers.
4. To research the influence of media.
5. To become familiar with the terminology for primary and secondary sexual dysfunctions.
6. To understand the human sexual response.
7. To consider homosexual, bi-sexual, trans-sexual and transgender relationships.

#### Topics

- Group reflection on talking about sex
- How to introduce sex into the counselling conversation.
- Personal reflection, limits and boundaries.
- Knowing when to refer to a psychosexual service.

## Day 5

### Affairs, how are they defined and why do they happen? What do I do when there is domestic abuse?

#### Aims

1. To consider the definition of an affair.
2. To explore why affairs happen, being alert to signs.
3. To understand triangular relationships and how patterns repeat.
4. To be aware of the domestic abuse policy in your organisation.
5. To understand all forms of domestic abuse.

### Topics

- Possible definitions of an affair.
- Common reasons why affairs happen.
- Personal triangular relationships.
- Personal responses to domestic abuse.

### Day 6

Working with endings, incorporating the social aspects of separation and divorce, and Fishers rebuilding model.

### Aims

1. To reflect on personal endings.
2. To consider the wider aspects when relationships end.
3. To understand the complexities of moving on after a relationship ends.
4. To explore if/how relationships can be repaired.
5. Link to Erikson's Psychosocial Stages of development.

### Topics

- Group reflections
- Group exercises
- Recap.

### Day 7

Recapping topics notified in advance by students and exploring difficulties encountered in live work.

### Aims

1. To review learning from previous 6 days.
2. Reflect on couples counselling practice.
3. To make final preparations for presentation.

### Topics

- Group to direct in advance
- Group discussion
- Group exercises

## Day 8

### Aims

1. Evaluation by presentation of a researched related topic 15 mins per person plus 10 mins discussion/questions.

### Topics

- Decided by each student.