

## Working with Couples Systemically



Course Information 2022/2023

## Contents:

- Contact Details 3
- Dates – Times – Tutors 3
- Food & Breaks 4
- Contact if Late 4
- Course Curriculum 4-7

### CONTACT DETAILS

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Please note that in the spirit of collaborative learning your e-mail address will be shared with the group on the register that will be passed around on the day. Please let us know if you are not happy for your details to be shared.

All course materials, dates and Zoom links will be available to you on the [CSC Course Hub](#). When you enrol on the training you will automatically be registered on the hub. Each Zoom session will be recorded and uploaded on to the 'Materials' section of the hub.

Dates - Times – Tutors – Venue				
Module	Date	Time	Location	Tutors
Module 1	6-8 December 2022 Tuesday - Thursday	9.30–5.30	Zoom	Chris Williams Jane James (day 1 and part of day 3)
Module 2	7-9 February 2023 Tuesday - Thursday	9.30–5.30	Zoom	Chris Williams Jane James (part of day 3)
Module 3	18-20 April 2023 Tuesday - Thursday	9.30–5.30	Zoom	Chris Williams
Module 4	6-8 June 2023 Tuesday - Thursday	9.30–5.30	Zoom	Chris Williams Bernd Leygraf (day 2)

### Food & Breaks

There will be a plenty of breaks throughout the day.

### Course Supports

The course will be supported by two course supports, Mahab Kazmi and Nada Rasoul. They are there to support the tutors and of course you. Their role is in the form of an internship. This is available to students who have completed the Foundation, Applied & Couples Training in the past and would like to continue to develop their knowledge and experience of systemic constellation work. They will ensure a smooth continuity between modules and tutors and will be there to assist you if needed.

### Please note

If you are going to be late, or are unable to attend for any reason, please call or text one of the Course Supports (see 'Contact Details' section above)

### Course Curriculum

This course will be led by **Christopher Williams**, BACP & UKCP, an internationally renowned trainer and couple's therapist working with both Gestalt and Systemic approaches. **Jane James**, a highly experienced practitioner and coach will also be teaching during some of the modules. **Bernd Leygraf**, from the NAOS Institute, will be teaching a day on Sex Therapy.

This training was originally created and designed by **Judith Hemming** who drew on her extensive professional experience of working with couples.

The purpose of this training is to give participants the opportunity to extend their therapeutic or coaching practice to include working with couples or other two-person systems. It is assumed that participants will already have basic skills in working with individuals, and therefore the course focus is on the shifts and additional skills needed to be of help when working with couples.

The teaching is intended to help therapists and coaches 'see' and work with systems, including the three interacting systems that are alive in the room when working with couples or two-person systems, and the wider and deeper family systems that surround the couple and often emerge and influence in hidden ways. We draw on both Gestalt theory as a basic orientation, and the systemic constellation philosophy developed by Bert Hellinger. We will also focus on presence, and an understanding of the many common contexts that bring couples into therapy or the issues that arise in two person systems in organisation.

## DURING THE FOUR MODULES WE WILL DEVELOP:

### 1. A basic framework

- The intimate relationship as a life journey, connecting two separate journeys.
- An understanding of the changing tasks of a relationship over time.
- An understanding of the cultural shifts in the institution of marriage.
- A look at what a relationship is for, and what intimacy consists of.
- Understanding of the perennial paradox between autonomy and communion.

### 2. The process model of intervening

- How a couple 'dance' together in real time in the room. This is a hugely helpful but challenging Gestalt model, and forms the practical basis of the therapeutic work or effective coaching interventions.
- Positive framing, even-handedness, phenomenological tracking, setting up practice opportunities.

### 3. Systemic thinking and interventions

- An understanding of the motivations and action, ways of managing exchange, culture, roles and beliefs, as they develop through personal loyalties and deeper systemic entanglements and burdens.
- Moving the therapeutic focus between the present, the near past and the further past.
- A basic understanding of the ordering forces that support the flow of love and intimacy and healthy partnership working.
- Using the constellation process in the couple's therapy room and healthy partnership working.

### 4. The therapist as instrument

- The special tasks and contributions of presence and stance, capacity to model and teach.
- Self disclosure, provocation, parallel process, projection, transference and counter-transference.
- The use of systemic sentences to promote primary energy.

## We will also look at specific topics that often arise with couples:

- **Sex** - its power, cost and consequences, the role of advice and training, the impact of pornography and a sexualized and image conscious culture. Affairs, betrayals, aging, fantasy.
- **Same and different sex couplings** – similarities and differences, unconscious prejudices; gender issues.
- **Needing and reaching out** - the value of this and how to work with it in the room. Intimacy, contact and withdrawal – the Gestalt interactive cycle as a map.
- **Children** - fertility issues, parenting and parentification, effect of separation, un-launched sons, missing fathers.
- **Families moving together** - the issues raised by our in-law relationships, and blended families.
- **Earlier relationships** - the place of previous partners.
- **Embodiment** - fantasy, splitting, the body as source.
- **Loss** - through bereavement, divorce, separation. Grief. Empty nests.
- **Cross-cultural issues** – race, sex, class, diversity, politics. Age gaps. Money.

- **The Individual** - and their place in the couple. Using constellating techniques with couples – genograms and desktop mapping.
- **Non-intimate couples** – throughout the course we will also be paying attention to working with non-intimate couples, i.e. two-person systems.

**General principles of the course include:**

- Each subject will be learnt by way of teaching, discussion and experiential exercises.
- Live couples will be invited for demonstration work.

