

Exploring the Dynamics of Fear and Attachment in Adult Life

A personal and professional development course for therapists held in-person over 4 weekends.

Dates: Saturdays and Sundays - 30th November & 1st December 2024, 18th & 19th January, 22nd & 23rd February, and 12th & 13th April 2025

Times: 10.00am to 1.00pm (24 CPD hours)

Venue: 17 Wetherby Road, YORK, YO26 5BS

Cost: £320 (may be paid in 4 x £80 monthly instalments)

Facilitator: Michael Guilding

As therapists, we are professional caregivers, and our work requires us to respond to the needs of others who seek care from us. Careseeking and caregiving are instinctive biological systems which, working in a straightforward manner, enhance our wellbeing and sense of self. However, when our careseeking needs are not adequately met by responsive caregiving in infancy and childhood, our patterns of careseeking and caregiving can be defensive (infiltrated by fear-system responses) and become complicated and ineffective.

This applies both to us as therapists and to the clients who come to us for help. However when our clients' fearful careseeking meets our fearful caregiving, neither of us achieve our goals and both are frustrated and diminished. As therapists we too often don't create the conditions that support our own personal and psychological development and patterns of defensive caregiving can ultimately create disillusionment and burnout.

This course, conducted over 4 weekends in 8 morning sessions in a closed confidential experiential group, is aimed at helping therapists to explore their own

patterns of careseeking and caregiving and become aware of the changes they might be able to make to these patterns in order to enhance their ability to both careseek and caregive more effectively and appropriately. This can lead to a significant improvement in wellbeing and self-esteem.

The theory behind this course was developed by Dorothy Heard and Brian Lake who built on the work of Bowlby, Ainsworth and others to formulate the “Dynamics of Attachment in Adult Life” consisting of seven biologically-based systems which, working together, strengthen and develop the self and help it to recover and maintain wellbeing in the face of threat. These seven systems are careseeking and caregiving, interest-sharing (exploration and play), affectionate sexuality, self-defence, the way we shape our external environment to be more or less supportive for us, and the way we manage our “internal environment” in which we either treat ourselves compassionately, or we attack and undermine ourselves. All of these seven systems are explored during this course.

The course itself was developed by Una McCluskey who integrated Heard and Lake’s work with her own research on attunement and has created a way of working in groups which fosters a safe environment for exploration and personal development. Therapists who have been put off working in a group by experiences of unsafe personal development groups during their training will find this approach very different.

I have developed Una McCluskey’s course on the Dynamics of Attachment to include my own exploration of our fear system as the activation of the fear system is the main obstacle to our ability to both caregive and careseek, and I believe that understanding and regulating our fear responses is central to our own wellbeing and to the effectiveness of our therapeutic work

To enquire or book please contact:
michael.guilding@gmail.com

Michael Guilding trained with Una McCluskey over a number of years in Exploratory Goal-Corrected Psychotherapy, the method of group work that will be used in this course.