

The Ecological Self:

Therapy and the Human Bond with Nature

A Core Study Course 2011

This course is an optional part of the training for the Diploma in Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy, and forms one unit of Module 2 in the MA in Humanistic Integrative Psychotherapy programme with Middlesex University.

This course emphasises the view that relationship with other-than-human life is fundamental to our existence, particularly at a time when ecological crisis has an impact on the psyche. We will look at the significance of this bond in biography, case studies, culture and society, and in the theory and practice of counselling and therapy. The latter applies to both content and process.

We will look at ways in which this connection can be included in (or excluded from) counselling and psychotherapy, and the ways in which its occurrence in sessions - for instance through the intervention of animals - can occur by accident or intention. We will consider: the eco-biographies of participants; the ways in which nature affects individual and group process (by interacting with horses and with a woodland setting); the appearance of this theme in our client work; how practitioners decide to include nature in their work, and what changes participants might make to the way they practice in future.

We will study the theorists of eco-psychology and eco-therapy and the ways they complement or contrast with the more familiar therapeutic theories. We will be making extensive use of access to animals and landscape available at the site of this course.

The course will take place near Nailsworth, using both sheltered (and warmed) and outdoor spaces in a woodland setting.

Syllabus:

- Theories of bonding with/separation from nature: Abram and Bernstein.
- Contrasting/complementing mainstream theory: Winnicott, Jung.
- Working with eco-biography: transference, displacement and authenticity.
- Animals and landscape as therapists/reflectors.
- The impact of eco-catastrophe: Macey, Lovelock.
- Nature in content and process of therapy - how practitioners consider and apply the possibility of inclusion: Sacks.

Reading List

Abram, David (1996)	<i>The Spell of the Sensuous</i>	New York, Vintage
Bernstein, Jerome (2005)	<i>Living in the Borderland</i>	Hove, Routledge
Buzzell, Linda; & Chalquist, Craig (2009)	<i>Ecotherapy</i>	San Francisco, Sierra Club
Jensen, Derrick (2000)	<i>A Language Older Than,</i>	London, Souvenir Press

	Words	
Kohanov, Linda (2003)	<i>Riding Between the Worlds</i>	Novato, New World Press
Lovelock, James (2010)	<i>The Vanishing Face of Gaia, A Final Warning</i>	Penguin
Roszak, Theodore; Gomes, Mary; & Kanner, Allen (1995)	<i>Ecopsychology</i>	San Francisco, Sierra Club
Sacks, Anita (2008)	<i>The Therapeutic Use of Pets in Private Practice</i>	London, BJP Vol 24 No 4

Assessment

There will be a written assignment (2,000 -3,000 words) demonstrating the student's ability to consider the application of course content to practice.

Kelvin Hall has a Diploma in Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy and is registered with UKCP. He has also trained in Transpersonal Psychology and has been researching this theme for several years, particularly through his pursuit of the art of horsemanship.

Dates and Fees

Applications from BCPC students in or entering Stage 2 (previously called 4P) are not subject to further selection criteria. Applications from other potential registrants will be subject to selection by the tutor (please contact the office for the relevant form).

We regret that we do not accept people onto this course if the tutor is your therapist.

Tutor: Kelvin Hall
Times: 10am – 5.00 pm each day
Dates: The course takes place over three weekends in 2011:
19/20 Feb, 19/20 March, & 30 April/1May
Venue: Shelters and land attached to Ruskin Mill, near Nailsworth, Glos.
Fee: **£575** (or £525 if not submitting an essay)
 The assessment essay is for students enrolling as a Core Course (Stage 2 Psychotherapy Diploma) but is otherwise optional
Cheques payable to BCPC by 4 February 2011

General Information

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the course information sheet is correct, BCPC cannot be held responsible for any errors or alterations that become apparent after publication.

BCPC reserves the right to cancel courses if numbers are too low to make the course viable, either from a learning or financial perspective. Acceptance of a place on a course is a contractual commitment to pay the full fee and refunds are not given after the payment deadline.