

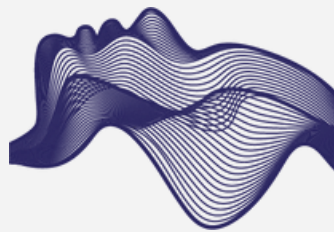
**MITC**

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# PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING TIPS

Resources for aspiring and trainee  
psychotherapists

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Therapist Collective



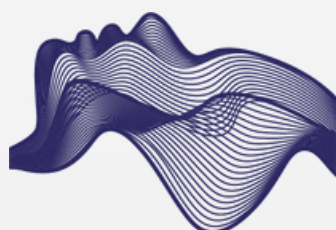
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## Introduction

Thinking about becoming a psychotherapist? Here's some information you might find useful. This is not an exhaustive or official list and there is likely to be things missing... I'm simply piecing together the content of conversations I've had with aspiring therapists. It will also have a relational psychoanalytic / attachment-based bias, as that is my preferred field, however it's important you find a school of thought that resonates with you.

### ABOUT ME

I am an attachment-based psychoanalytic psychotherapist, which is a lengthy way of saying that I work with clients from the perspective of exploring the quality and availability of their interpersonal relationships; from the very first relationships with their primary caregivers and how t patterns formed in early life shape how the client relates to themselves (and others) in current relationships.

### WHO ARE MY CLIENTS?

I have worked with a variety of clients from creative industries (pop stars, producers, rappers, label managers, actors, creative directors, designers & musicians) to property developers, sex workers, psychologists and news readers.

They each have differing histories, lifestyles, belief systems, perspectives, occupational stressors and needs but they all share something in common: they are all seeking clarity, emotional support & a deeper understanding of themselves through therapy. Some of my clients have diagnoses such as complex PTSD, bipolar I or personality disorders and are also being seen by psychiatrists and other support workers; sometimes they are high functioning but lacking purpose or meaning in their life. Each client is different, but they are all seeking change.

### **CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE YOU START**

Couple of starter questions – what are your underlying motives? How do you feel being close to people in distress or experiencing intense emotion? Often therapists have experienced the benefits of therapy themselves and felt they may be a good fit for the role. Life experience and experiencing your own difficulties (whatever that might be – bereavement & loss, addiction, depression & anxiety, separations or relational difficulties) is a strength in this industry, it may mean that you are able to get closer to the client's experience and empathise on a deeper level. Training is a challenging process and involves a lot of self-exploration and evaluation, but it is hugely rewarding.

## Training suggestions

### WHAT TYPE OF THERAPY SHOULD I CHOOSE?

The UKCP has a guide to the various schools of psychotherapy training here:

<https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/about-psychotherapy/types/>

If you are unsure of the difference between psychotherapist, counsellor, psychologist and psychiatrist, read this:

<https://www.theguardian.com/careers/2017/may/25/thinking-of-a-career-in-therapy-here-are-your-options>.

### TRAINING ROUTES

Though it is an unregulated industry (meaning anyone can call themselves a psychotherapist), there are two main registration bodies in the UK. These are the UKCP (UK Council for Psychotherapy) and the BACP (British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists). It takes roughly 3 years to register with the BACP (PG Dip + 100 client hours + a multiple choice Certificate of Proficiency exam), and a minimum of 4 years (often 5+) to register with the UKCP.

So, why would anyone aim for UKCP when you can register with the BACP in a far shorter time? It is a competitive industry so having UKCP registration can be of benefit.

It requires longer, more in-depth training and as such may mean that you are better placed to find work and to work with a wider range of clients. It gives you more time to work on yourself and your underlying defences and patterns which is of huge benefit to the work – the more self-aware you are, the more you can own what you bring in to the room and the better service you can provide.

### **TRAINING PREPARATION**

Prior to training you may be expected to have done a year of volunteering (in a caring role) and to have been in a year of therapy with a therapist aligned to the training provider's theory of mind, prior to starting the course.

Some courses require that you complete a foundation certificate prior to joining. I completed a certificate over a year in Birkbeck, alongside introductory lectures at the Institute for Psychoanalysis before starting an MA course at Regent's University, before going on to a clinical training via a conversion course at the Bowlby Centre. Regent's offer intense foundation courses and the Bowlby Centre allows you to start your training without direct prior experience – each training provider is different, so do investigate.

After the certificate it's either a 4-year continuous training or it's broken into a 2-year general psychotherapy & counselling PG Diploma/MA (if you choose to do a dissertation) followed by a 2-year Advanced Diploma (in Regent's the Advanced Dip options were Integrative Psychotherapy – giving a broad overview of the main branches of psychotherapy or Existential Psychotherapy which is grounded in existential philosophy).

After training you will be required to continue CPD courses, which can broaden your knowledge and skillset and help you to specialise. So, for example, my initial training at Regent's did not include a module on trauma, so I attended additional training at the European Society of Trauma & Dissociation and Somatic Trauma Training with Babette Rothschild.

As I work with client's who have been diagnosed with personality disorders, I also trained in Mentalisation-Based Treatment (MBT) at the Anna Freud Centre.

I would highly recommend the annual Bowlby Centre Conference.



## LONDON TRAINING PROVIDERS

UKCP training providers meet the following criteria – 4 years of a taught course + 450 clinical supervised voluntary client hours. I would advise you to start your training with a UKCP approved training provider - you can always register with BACP once you have a 100 hours client work under your belt.

The Bowlby Centre

The Minster Centre

Regent's University

Tavistock & Portman

Metanoia

Birkbeck

UCL

There are many more.

Some lead to a PG diploma, Advanced Diploma or MA, some are less academic & more clinically focussed. Psychoanalytic trainings will often include an 18-month infant observation (where you observe a primary caregiver and baby over 18 months and watch how their relationship & the baby's sense of self develops). If you think you'll want to teach later on, most institutions require you to have completed an MA. Go to open days, talk to the tutors and see which feels like a good fit for you.



## Personal Therapy

You'll be in therapy for the duration of your training and some training providers ask that you have been in therapy for at least 1 year prior to training, so if you're interested in training find yourself a UKCP reg therapist. It's important that the therapist you work with is a good fit for you (in that you feel comfortable working with them and that they understand what you are trying to convey). I see a twice weekly attachment based psychoanalytic psychotherapist who is UKCP registered in accordance with my current training provider's (The Bowlby Centre) requirements. Whilst at Regent's, however, I saw a weekly existential therapist.

### WHY DO YOU NEED TO BE IN THERAPY?

It's very important that you are aware of and are working through your own material before beginning work with clients. This is where your personal therapy comes in. Having your own therapy mitigates the risk of you being triggered by the client's material and develops awareness of what you are bringing into the room, so you can better read and work with the transference between you.

Through your own therapeutic work (and your training) you will discover the function of your defences, identifying biases/assumptions/prejudices/blind spots, processing unresolved traumas, identifying relational patterns, how you cope in a crisis, learning how you regulate your emotions, how you respond in group dynamics and how others experience your contributions, how your individual constellation of experiences and the perspective that gave you interacts with a client's, and much more.

It requires you to be open and vulnerable and this can be personally challenging (the good news is you will become more self-aware and resilient as a result).

During your training you will be exposed to people in distress (colleagues as well as clients). Self-care practices can help you process the emotions that arise in response. Think about how you currently self-soothe, how you re-centre yourself and how you identify and process stress. It would be a good idea to build sound self-care practices early on in your training. I was surprised to discover how much emotion I picked up from other therapists in training, and clients and how this manifest for me physically.

Once my client load increased I realised I needed to also increase my self-care practices. Your body is a tool that helps you to read non-verbal communication from your clients, and so learning how affects are physically held is a key skill to develop. Some ideas could be: regular exercise, creative pursuits, talking to friends and family, healthy eating, time in green spaces, reflective practices, active relaxation, mindfulness, rest, nature and regular breaks. Find what works for you.

## **COSTS**

Course course vary and are usually broken into 3 terms and can be paid for in sections. I expect it's a fair bit higher than I paid (£4200-6500 per annum) these days.

On top of this there is the cost of your therapy. If that is weekly, it may be between £30-£80 per week, depending on what you agree with your therapist. This doubles if you have therapy twice a week (as in for attachment-based psychoanalytic trainings). Your therapist may be able to accommodate a low fee slot - if you feel that is appropriate for you, do ask.

When you begin working with clients (in year 2 or 3 depending on your training provider) you will be volunteering for at least 1 afternoon or day per week in order to have experience with clients and to build up your client hours. This is unpaid and unavoidable – the clinical work is where you really cut your teeth and you are being ‘paid’ in learning opportunities (and often, with good supervision that is offered as part of the training provider – sometimes it isn’t).

You may also need to pay for Supervision, which is around the £70-£100 mark per hour. Some supervisors offer low fee supervision to trainees and some course providers include it as part of their fee. Again, check this out.

I partly funded my training through a Career Development Loan (interest free for 5 years, up to 10k). Please note that you need to ensure the course is compatible with the loan – some aren't.

Universities may offer bursaries and scholarships. In terms of bursaries from psychotherapy trade bodies, I have only come across bursaries from the UKCP which are £1000. There may be more.

On the following pages you can find some suggested reading lists and CPD courses.

Wishing you the very best of luck!

Tamsin Embleton

## MUSIC INDUSTRY BOOKS

- Touring and Mental Health the Music Industry Manual - Tamsin Embleton
- ACT for Musicians - David Juncos and Elvire de Paiva e Pona
- Creative Recovery - Susan Raeburn and Eric Maisel
- Can Music Make You Sick? - Sally Ann Gross and George Musgrave
- Musicians and Addiction - Paul Saintilan
- Illusions of Immortality: A Psychology of Fame & Celebrity - David Giles
- Sound Advice - Lucy Heyman and Rhian Jones
- Biographies like Ryan Dusick of Maroon 5 - Harder to Breathe

## THERAPY BOOKS

- Attachment in Psychotherapy - David J. Wallin.
- An Introduction to the Therapeutic Relationship in Counselling & Psychotherapy - Stephen Paul & Divine Charura
- Marriage in Motion - Schwartz and Schwartz (good for touring couples)
- On Being a Therapist - Jeffrey A. Kottler
- Doing Psychotherapy - Robin Shapiro
- The Making of a Therapist - Louis Cozolino



## Continued Professional Development

- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Addiction and Recovery training by Music Support
- Trauma related trainings
- EMDR
- Polyvagal Informed Training
- Working with eating disorders
- Working with addiction
- Working with neurodiversity
- ACT for Music Performance Anxiety (by Dr David Juncos)
- MBT or DBT
- Brief focused psychodynamic psychotherapy
- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
- Codependency

**MITC**

**MITC** is an international collective of psychologists and psychotherapists - all of whom held professional careers in the music business prior to retraining.

We work with agents, promoters, performers and creatives, managers, record labels and tours.

Our book '**Touring and Mental Health: the Music Industry Manual**' was a Rough Trade Book of the Year 2023.

**Visit our  
Website**

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