



**West Midlands Institute of Psychotherapy**

# **The Training in Jungian Analytical Psychotherapy**



# **Infant Observation Prospectus**

**DECEMBER 2017**

West Midlands Institute of Psychotherapy is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
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Member U.K. Council for Psychotherapy  
Registered with the British Psychoanalytic Council

## **MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING OF THE COURSE**

### **Infant Observation Leaders:**

Becky Wylde, B.A. (Hons)	Senior Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist Full Member A.C.P. (Association of Child Psychotherapists)
Lucy Mills, BA(Hons), MA	Senior Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist Full Member A.C.P. (Association of Child Psychotherapists)

### **Consultant to the Infant Observation Training:**

Lisa Miller, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist, Tavistock Clinic. Editor, International Journal of Infant Observation. Former organiser of the Under 5s Service and Workshop, Tavistock Clinic.

### **External Essay Reader:**

Marguerite Reid, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist, Perinatal Service, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London.

### **Administrator:**

Sue Harford

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## ETHOS

Infant observation has been part of the West Midlands Jungian Training in Analytical Psychotherapy since its beginning in 1990 and it is a requirement for all trainees. We have extended this programme and it is now open to non-trainees. We see this development as adding to the diversity and richness of the observation experience.

The infant observation course is suitable both for psychotherapists who wish to enhance their professional work by a greater understanding of the baby's early life and relationships, and for those who are considering the possibility of training in psychotherapy.

### **Origins of Infant Observation**

As a discipline, infant observation has a long tradition. It began more than 50 years ago at the Tavistock Clinic as part of the first child psychotherapy training. Its inception and development is primarily associated with Esther Bick. Although Bick wrote rather little - only four published papers in all - her pioneering ideas, grounded in her observational experiences, have had a profound and enduring influence on psychoanalytic thinking about primitive emotional states in the baby. As a skilled observer of babies and as an inspiring teacher, she laid the foundations of an approach which has provided a new and powerful way into the baby's world.

### **The Nature of Infant Observation**

The term 'infant observation' is not strikingly informative and, as a field of study, it may even be confused with 'infant research'. However, infant research is a different approach where experiments are set up to observe the development and behaviour of babies under controlled conditions. Such research has, in recent years, produced a wealth of information about the competence and social relatedness of even tiny babies, and about the development of the self. These differing approaches may be seen as complementary: the one within the accepted paradigm of 'objective' research; the other, which is offered here, exemplifying a radically different model.

Infant observation is a 'naturalistic' experience and takes place within the family. The emphasis is on depth and particularity, and unconscious communications are of fundamental importance. The observer's task is to seek to enter the baby's world and to observe minutely what is going on for the child within in the family and particularly in relation to the mother. It requires the observer, as far as possible, to leave behind existing theories and presuppositions, and to open themselves to the immediate experience. The observer is required not merely to register what is 'out there' but seeks also to be aware of, and make use of, their own emotional responses. Counter-transference responses are central to the observational process.

This exploration of the baby's world engenders a vivid sense of the close links between psyche and soma and it affords the opportunity for the observer to witness, at first hand, the crucial power of relationship.

### **The Place of Seminars**

The spirit of openness and enquiry that characterizes infant observation is encouraged and developed in the seminars, and the collective explorations in seminar meetings are an essential part of the infant observation process. It is where uncertainties are shared and where emotional states, not least in the observer, can emerge and be reflected upon. Anxieties are thought about and, in time, the observer's capacity to bear anxiety, and seek to understand it rather than relieve it, can grow.

The seminar is not only a secure place of containment at difficult times but it is also where individual observations can be enriched by the thoughts and contributions of other group- members, and where all gain from the diversity of experiences. The seminar is a matrix in which imaginative insights and creative new thinking can be constellated. Observers often describe a sense of 'privilege' and wonder and even numinosity at what they experience.

While infant observation is not theory-driven, it is in the seminar that connections with theory can arise and be shared, leading to exciting examples of the reciprocal nature of theory and practice: sometimes what is found in an observation can be a powerful, lively representation of a familiar theory; sometimes a particularly knotty bit of theory is suddenly, through the observation, grasped; sometimes what is experienced in an observation raises questions about an aspect of psychoanalytic thinking that had previously been accepted, affording a salutary reminder of the provisional nature of theory.

### **Infant Observation and Clinical practice.**

First and foremost, infant observation enriches one's knowledge of the process of child development. But, because the process is grounded in empathic understanding, it is also a special and valuable form of learning for the observers themselves. The observation can evoke their own early experiences and contribute to a growing self-awareness.

Simply being with the patient is at the heart of psychotherapeutic work, and infant observation has relevance here. The role of the observer is to seek be present, to be in a kind of reverie, precluded from activity, bearing anxiety, and waiting for what will emerge. This is strikingly like what is needed in clinical work. It brings to mind the way that Bion abjures the therapist to leave behind memory and desire in entering the consulting room, and Freud's stress on the importance of observation over the need for quick meaning.

To undertake an infant observation is to make a big commitment and to open oneself to change. It is not to be undertaken lightly. However, almost invariably, observers find it to be a singularly important experience in their lives and for their clinical practice.

### **Relation to the Jungian Training Committee**

Whilst this Infant Observation course is offered under the auspices of the West Midlands Jungian Training Committee, it is not specifically 'Jungian'. Given the 'a-theoretical' nature of the work it could not be so. However, it is consonant with the nature of the adult analytical training where richness, diversity and authenticity are valued in a way that leads to an experience of education that is open, questioning, lively, and evolving.

## **THE CONTENTS OF THE COURSE**

The infant observation training has several components:

1. Preparation seminar for the observation
2. The observations themselves
3. The seminar group in which observations are discussed
4. Individual tutorials for infant observation group members
5. Annual reports from the observation group leader
6. Occasional seminars for both infant observation groups together during the 2 year observation process
7. A final essay based on the participant's infant observation
8. An Assessment of Learning

## **1. Preparation Seminars**

Preparation seminars are led by one of the infant observation group leaders when there are spaces coming up in observation groups. Generally there are two seminars of one and a quarter hours each. They take place in Birmingham on a Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon. Issues discussed include: being an observer; setting up the observation and finding a baby to observe; the first observational visit; and recording of observations.

## **2. The Infant Observation**

The infant observation involves observing a baby and their developing relationships from birth (or as close to birth as possible), for one hour a week in the baby's home, up to the age of two years.

## **3. Seminar Groups**

The seminar groups meet usually four times a term for, two and a half hours, at Leamington Spa or South Birmingham\*. The maximum number of participants in each seminar group is five. Each student will usually present a recent detailed observation to the seminar group twice a term, and will provide copies of the written recording of those observations for all other seminar members.

\* Location of seminars may be subject to changes and participants will be notified in advance if a change is necessary.

## **4. Individual Tutorials**

Individual tutorials with the infant observation leader are scheduled to take place, usually, once a term. This time can be used, for example, to think about how the individual participant is finding the process of observing a baby, any problems which might have arisen, for discussing the yearly infant observation leader's report, or for thinking about the content of the forthcoming final essay on the observation.

## **5. Annual Report**

An annual report will be written by the seminar leader. An opportunity will be made for these to be discussed with each participant individually. These reports are designed to be helpful to each seminar participant in their development as observers.

## **6. Seminars**

Teaching seminars may be arranged annually on a Saturday in Birmingham for which some prior reading on the theme of 'primitive anxieties' will be required. These seminars will provide an opportunity for the two parallel infant observation group participants to meet together and discuss their experiences of observing, with this theme in mind.

## **7. Final Essay**

Writing an essay of around 8000 words (within 10% either way) focussing on the infant observation is considered a meaningful and integral part of the whole observation experience. This paper should be submitted within one year of ending the infant observation. It is expected to demonstrate links between the observed baby within the family, psychoanalytic child development theory, and the significance of the seminar member as participant observer. Participants will discuss the requirements of this essay with their infant observation seminar leader as part of their preparation for this essay, in which the development of the baby within his or her family setting will be central.

## **8. Assessment of Learning**

Participants are required to write an annual assessment of their own learning which will be discussed with their seminar leader in a tutorial.



## **PRE-REQUISITES**

1. This programme meets a requirement of the WMIP Training in Jungian Analytical Psychotherapy. There are no further requirements for Trainees in the Jungian Training in Analytical Psychotherapy.
2. This programme may be followed as a CPD programme.

Applicants are expected to have established themselves in a relevant profession. Applicants will be expected to have had some experience of individual psychotherapy of an analytical /psychodynamic orientation and also will usually be in therapy for a period before commencing and during the period of the observation.

## **METHOD OF APPLICATION**

Application forms may be obtained from Mrs Sue Harford, Administrator, Jungian Training Committee, Unit 1A, West Stockwith Park, Stockwith Road, Misterton, Nottinghamshire, DN10 4ES. There is an application fee to cover the cost of interviews and administration.

Applicants are asked to provide details of: their current work situation; the name and professional membership of their therapist, the frequency and duration of their personal psychotherapy; the names and addresses of two referees. They are also asked to write about why they wish to take part in an Infant Observation programme.

Applicants seen as meeting these requirements will have an assessment interview with the Infant Observation facilitators.

The Jungian Training Committee will consider the application form together with the interviewers' report and references and is responsible for the final decision.

Any member of the Training Committee who has a patient applying for the programme is not present for any part of the discussion of that application and does not receive copies of the application documents.

## **FEES**

Training is self-financed and non-profit making.

### **1. Application Fee**

The Application Fee of £150 should be enclosed with the application form. The fee covers the cost of the application and selection process. In the event of an applicant not being selected for interview this fee is refunded.

Existing trainees of the Training in Jungian Analytical Psychotherapy are exempt from this application fee, but if accepted on to the infant observation component of the course are expected to pay the DBS fee (if applicable). (See Page 10 for further details)

### **2. Programme Fees**

The programme fee covers the cost of teaching seminars, group processing seminars, tutorials, reports, and readers' fees for the final paper. The fee is payable termly in advance and is based on projected costs averaged over the two years of the programme.

The fee is reviewed annually and may be subject to an increase.

As a guideline the termly fee for 2017/2018 will be £230.00 for Jungian Trainees and £300.00 for Non-Jungian Trainees

All fees should be made payable to The Training in Jungian Analytical Psychotherapy.

## QUALIFICATION

All participants will be eligible for a Certificate of Completion:

- as a part of their training in the Jungian Analytical Psychotherapy programme.
- or as a record of their Continuing Professional Development work.

A Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of elements of the programme may be made available in extenuating circumstances.

## CODES OF ETHICS AND PRACTICE

All participants are required to abide by a Code of Ethics and Practice of at least the equivalent of the WMIP Code of Ethics and Practice.

Any participant whose work is not covered by an equivalent code will be expected to apply for general membership of WMIP and to abide by the WMIP Code of Ethics and Practice.

All participants, irrespective of whether they currently have an existing DBS disclosure in place, will have to undergo a basic DBS check. Arrangements have been made for this to be done through our Administrator and there will be a fee charged (currently around **£35.00**). Our Administrator should be contacted several months in advance of the expected beginning of the observation.

## **Jungian Training Committee**

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