**Family Systemic Psychotherapy**

Family and systemic psychotherapy – also known as family therapy – can help those in close relationships to better understand and support each other. It enables family members to express and explore difficult thoughts and emotions safely, understand each other’s experiences and views and work together to make useful changes in their relationships and their lives.

Family therapists respect the importance of each person’s beliefs and culture and experiences and will adapt our approach to suit the ages, needs, and preferences of each family they see. The focus of family therapy is on how to move forward although sometimes it is important to think about past events and their impact on the present and future.

**Who are involved?**

Different people have different ideas about what ‘family’ means. So ‘family’ is used to describe any group of people who care about each other and call themselves a family. As well as parents and children of all ages, we may also, or instead, involve grandparents, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins, friends, carers, and other professionals, whoever is important to the family.

We can see children and adults on their own, or with other family members. Sometimes we will offer a mixture of individual and family appointments, if we think that will be useful. Family therapists can also work with couples, for example parents of children and young people who we may be involved with.

At times, the family and the therapist may wish to involve members of other services, such as school staff or other people who may know one or all members of the family well and are prepared to contribute to the discussions. Often these meetings are very helpful in supporting solutions.

**What do we offer?**

We offer Systemic Family Therapy with a qualified Family Systemic Psychotherapist. Typically, this involves 6 weekly or fortnightly sessions, the first of which is an initial consultation to find out whether this is the intervention most appropriate for the young person in question and their family.

After the 6 sessions we will conduct a review with the family and decide whether more sessions are needed or whether the intervention may end. Sometimes it only takes a few sessions to help a family find a new way of relating. Sometimes difficulties are more complicated, and families may need longer to find the solutions that work best for them.

Family Systemic Therapy can help families and relationships in a variety of situations such as:

* Families facing special challenges like mental illness, physical illness, bereavement, family conflicts, cultural adjustments, trauma, etc.
* Families who are worried about their children’s behaviour.
* Families who are fostering and adopting children.
* Any family who would like someone to help them talk about difficult things together in a way that’s safe, open, creative and useful.

Family Systemic Therapy does not aim to solve a problem held by an individual in a unilateral way. Instead it seeks to engage the co-operation of all members of the family to find the solutions that are best suited for the family, together. Children, young people and their families are likely to benefit from this intervention, especially when there is already an awareness in the family that the difficulties do not reside only or ‘within’ a particular individual, but the whole family can be supported to find different ways to relate and support each other.

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