Psychotherapy training reaches its Turning Point

Turning Point, founded in 1986 by Kay Conroy and Mary Walsh, is one of the first organisations in Ireland to offer humanistic and integrative counselling and psychotherapy services. A registered charity, it continues to offer these services today.

Turning Point Training Institute (TPTI) offers a range of educational and training programmes, including formal training for professional accreditation and programmes designed for continuing personal and professional development.

It also offers an MSc in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy programme at its training centre in Dublin, which is validated and awarded by University College Cork.

“At TPTI we take a holistic view of the person as a relational being. Our integrative approach recognises all aspects of the person, including the mind, body, spirit and emotions. We also recognise that we all live and operate within a particular social and cultural context,” said director Mary Walsh.

She added: “We understand that psychotherapy is centred around a co-created relationship between therapist and client that develops awareness, in order to serve the needs of the client. We believe that clients have the ability to heal themselves and thereby effect change in their lives as active agents in their therapeutic relationship.”

“We also recognise that at certain times of our lives, particular challenges, crises or turning points may arise and it is in the individual therapist-client relationship that the process of integration occurs. Psychotherapy outcome research affirms the crucial role of the therapeutic relationship in developing client self-development and awareness.”

TPTI does not subscribe to the view that any one, single approach to psychotherapy is ‘the only way’. It recognises the uniqueness of each person, and that different approaches are appropriate to the individual client in different situations. The integrative approach emphasises the development of a relational capacity and draws on, and is often informed by, more than one therapeutic modality.

The process of integration happens on many levels, both in terms of a coherent theoretical model, the therapist’s integration and practice, and the personal integration of the client. TPTI does not teach one particular model of integration, but rather supports students in the activity of integration itself.

Kay Conroy, director, said: “TPTI teaches students to integrate theories and skills from several different therapeutic models into a coherent and flexible framework of their own, in order to best meet the uniqueness of each client. The activity of integration cultivates an ability to communicate through different modalities, and to have an openness and curiosity about the essential elements in any therapeutic process.”

Because TPTI is focused on the personal integration of therapists, the training it offers emphasises the full engagement of the student, in terms of developing self-reflexivity, self-understanding, and sensitivity to the other person through individual and group work.

According to Conroy: “The emphasis is on the cultivation of an attitude of respect, kindness, honesty and equality in regard to the personhood of the client, in a manner that upholds the integrity and humanity of both the self and the other. This personal work also allows the therapist to become ‘empathically attuned’ to the client.”

The MSc in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy, validated and awarded by UCC, commences in September/October each year. It is a part-time programme taken over four years, and graduates are respected and welcomed throughout the psychotherapy profession.

This professional training programme is accredited and recognised by a host of professional bodies including The Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP), The Irish Association of Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy (IAHIP), The Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP), The European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP), The European Association of Integrative Psychotherapy (EAIP).

In terms of time commitment, students are required to attend classes one weekend each month for eight or nine months from September to May/June each year. In addition, all students are required to attend personal therapy weekly during the four years of the course, attend fortnightly clinical supervision for their clinical practice during years three and four, and attend regular academic supervision for their masters’ thesis during year four.

For more details, email admin@tpti.ie, call 01-2800626, or visit turningpoint.ie