

Biographical Notes

I have lived in the Sevenoaks area most of my life. I'm married with two older children.

Since my troubled teenager years I've been deeply interested in understanding what life is about and have investigated numerous psychological and spiritual perspectives over the years.

I found in my own therapy journey a wonderful relief, to at last understand what had been driving me to be the way I was. It soon became clear to me that I wanted to work in this field, that my interest and passion was in this direction of finding freedom for myself and assisting others.

To be able to help others, has taken many years of training, studying and personal therapy, I started practicing in 2001. I am now an accredited member of BACP (British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists) and I uphold their codes of practice and ethical standards.

I'm in post-graduate training (MA) for UKCP membership (United Kingdom Council Psychotherapy)

Fees:

My usual fees are
Individuals £40 for 60 minutes
Couples £60 for 75 minutes

I generally see people weekly, especially to start with.

I am happy to work either short or medium term, or, on an open ended basis. Everyone, their circumstances, needs and what they want from therapy is very different. So how long it might take is very hard to estimate, it varies enormously. I am sure however that, *any* gain in awareness and understanding, is always powerfully beneficial.

Please feel free to phone me if you would like any further information. If I'm not available please leave a message and I will get back to you.

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Gestalt / Humanistic Approach



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About Gestalt

My training has been in Gestalt counselling and psychotherapy at The Gestalt Centre, London. Gestalt is an existential humanistic approach which sees the fundamental task of therapy as increasing awareness. We all try to live the best way we can, for most of us this meant at some stage 'adjusting' ourselves in order to survive. This then meant we sacrificed some of our ability to live in a satisfying, free, creative and enjoyable way.

These 'adjustments' were about pushing aside the pain, hurt, loss or distress that was too much to bear, into a split off part ourselves. The pain is pushed aside; which means that we have to limit our being and awareness in order to keep it at bay. This then results in many compensatory processes and internal conflict, which means we end up suffering in a different way.

Often, it is the sense of not understanding what's going on, what these forces within us are, that can be very disconcerting or distressing. Fear can turn into panic, with its associated fight, flight or freeze responses. Panic is the enemy of psychological health and the cause of many 'symptoms'. It can also turn into depression with a closing down and turning in of the self.

Therapy is about helping to increase awareness of ourselves; our reactions, motivations and fears. We all naturally avoid what is painful in our lives, but it is through deeper awareness of those areas that we habitually avoid, where we can start to resolve the internal conflicts that can keep us powerlessly stuck in repetitive cycles.

Gestalt is a holistic approach; we are heart, head, body and spirit, and getting to know how these aspects of ourselves work within us is fundamental. Very often one part is developed more than another, which is one aspect of how we maintain the splits in ourselves and maintain our unawareness.

Therapy supports our awareness of 'what is', it helps us to see more of 'what' we are, and 'how' we work. Gestalt works through support, dialogue, experimentation, contact and challenge, to raise awareness of ourselves in the here and now; awareness of our thoughts, our emotions, and our bodies with all their intimate interconnections.

This inevitably means gradually facing the pain that was too much to bear. Allowing and facing the split off aspects of ourselves enables them to re-integrate in a liberating healing process. As we understand and integrate more, the more we can face what we pushed aside. Gathering and processing this extra 'missing' information leads to greater self-knowledge and understanding, which supports greater being. With this we can be freer to be ourselves, instead of fearfully trying to maintain a mask of who we think we should, or ought, to be.

Often there is the sense of failure or weakness around seeking help. Most of us have taken in something of the view that we should be strong and self-sufficient. But we all need help to find better ways of living. It takes courage to embark on what can be, especially to start with, the scary journey of understanding ourselves; in the end though, nothing is more satisfying and meaningful.

Who is it for?

People go into counselling or therapy for many reasons; from the wish for relief in a crisis to that of wanting to explore and understand the meaning of their lives. Therapy crosses the boundaries between Science (the relief of symptoms) and Art (the exploration of meaning).

It's what you want that is important. It can take time to understand what our wants and needs are, and sometimes they change as awareness develops. But it's still important that at every stage you feel in control over what happens and aware of your choices.

I see people with a wide variety of issues. They may be general, like unhappiness or loneliness or for specific difficulties such as –

Depression,
Anxiety, Stress,
Relationship problems
Past abuse, Trauma
Addictions
Compulsions, Eating disorders
Grief, Bereavement
Personal Development
Loss of meaning
Marriage & Couples counselling