



## **Diploma in Nature Allied Psychotherapy**

*Course Brochure*

April 2021 – February 2022



## Introduction to the Nature Therapy School

The Nature Therapy School provides professional training for psychotherapists and outdoor practitioners working to support well-being in natural settings. The School was founded by Beth Collier in 2013 to meet growing interest in the therapeutic use of nature to support well-being. The School's programme provides innovative approaches to incorporating nature as and within psychotherapeutic practice.

Our trainings are immersive and held in outdoors settings throughout the UK. We offer CPD short courses and year long trainings.

We promote the benefits of working therapeutically in nature to therapists and outdoor practitioners. We aim to;

- provide high quality professional trainings
- promote the benefits of practising outdoors
- form a centre of excellence in the training and practice of nature-based therapies

Our courses are held within small groups within base camp settings to encourage intimacy within our relationships with others and with nature.

We aim to train psychotherapists to be able to be authentic and congruent practitioners, grounded in a positive attachment with nature and therefore able to model connection for their clients. We aim to train outdoor professionals to maximise the potential of their work to support well-being.

## Nature Therapy School Philosophy

The Nature Therapy School's approach is underpinned by Beth Collier's work theorising Nature Allied Psychotherapy as a modality for ongoing client work, in allegiance with nature. Her publication *Nature Allied Psychotherapy: Exploring Relationships with Self, Others and Nature*, will be published by Routledge in 2021.

Human health is dependent on a healthy relationship with nature. When a disconnection occurs our sense of well-being will suffer. Many people in today's world have lost a sense of belonging to the natural world, therapeutic work in allegiance with nature helps to address the traumas of disconnection, processing loss and repairing dissociative relationships with nature.

Our approach embraces anthropological and spiritual perspectives about our relationship with nature, Embodiment, Attachment, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Woodland living skills, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural histories.

We work with embodied and sensory understandings of nature and connection.

## Nature Allied Psychotherapy

Nature Allied Psychotherapy is a modality of ongoing client work, in allegiance with nature.

Taking place in natural settings, in addition to exploring our human relationships, Nature Allied Psychotherapy creates the opportunity to explore our relationship with nature.

Neuroscience is now proving what many of us know through experience; that being in nature makes us feel good. It has quantifiable health promoting characteristics, reducing depression, anxiety, rumination and stress whilst enhancing our mood, focus, meditative feelings and triggering the area of brain associated with empathy and love.

Nature is able to offer the core conditions of a primary care giver and therefore positive attachment, being truly a mother; creating the therapeutic potential for the process to support clients in developing secure attachments with both people and nature.

Nature is a 'significant other' in our lives, just like our family and friends – the state of our relationship with nature will affect our sense of well-being just as the type of relationship we have with parents, siblings and colleagues will too.

Within the therapeutic encounter nature can be experienced in many ways; as a location, an intervention, a co-counsellor, a dynamic container, a secure base, a therapist, a supervisor and primary source of attachment. Nature provides a rich and dynamic presence which can animate and actualise established orientations traditionally practised indoors, allowing the therapeutic process to move from exploring in the abstract to applying the fullness of the philosophy in the real.

During sessions nature becomes part of our therapeutic relationship. Nature is used as a medium for emotional exploration and as a metaphor for our inner world in an applied way; our senses are engaged and we can work with an embodied experience of nature as something to relate with, something we are both in and part of. It offers therapy in the real world, here and now.

Nature Allied Psychotherapy introduces nature as a source of emotional support which can continue long after sessions with the human therapist have finished.

Taken from upcoming publication Beth Collier, *Nature Allied Psychotherapy; Exploring Relationships with Self, Others and Nature*, Routledge, 2021

## Diploma in Nature Allied Psychotherapy

Nature based psychotherapy is an emerging field of therapeutic practice, Nature Allied Psychotherapy provides a theoretical underpinning for the work, establishing a modality which;

- takes place in natural settings
- explores the clients' relationship with nature in addition to exploration of their human relationships
- exposes clients to the health promoting qualities of nature
- is an applied form of psychological anthropology

Our innovative one year Diploma training programme is the first of its kind, designed to support students' connection with nature and develop their confidence working with clients in natural settings.

This training will support students in developing an applied approach to the use of nature as a metaphor for our inner world and in using nature as a medium for emotional exploration and connection.

The course incorporates the development of our own awareness of and attachment to nature, explorations of the therapeutic relationship, process, frame, containment and practicalities in nature based therapy, boundaries and risks, the use of metaphor and symbolism, anthropological perspectives on the role of nature in our lives, an exploration of theoretical underpinnings, experiential learning and the development of practical nature based skills.

The course is fully immersive, all of our learning will take place outdoors in woodland and parkland in areas of chalk grassland within south London.

The course journeys throughout the year embracing the seasons and cycles. Nature and all that she brings will become part of our experience.

The course is suitable for psychotherapists/counsellors who have trained in a range of different orientations. The training will explore how current orientations can be 'actualised' through nature allied practice.

### **Ethos of the Training**

Our own relationship with nature is central to Nature Allied psychotherapy. The course focuses on developing our own connection and attachment to nature, this relationship becomes part of the frame of Nature Allied Psychotherapy. This training acknowledges nature as a therapeutic container, co-counsellor and primary source of attachment.

Subjects covered include:

- Nature and Emotional Health
- Neuroscience
- Therapeutic Relationship
- Therapeutic Container
- Theoretical underpinnings
- Attachment
- Frame
- Boundaries
- Woodland living skills
- Nature-based interventions
- Anthropological perspectives
- Psychology of survival and living
- Ritual, Symbolism and Metaphor
- Cycles
- Beginnings and Endings

## Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The course comprises experiential and taught components including, seminars, demonstrations, meditation, group work, student presentations and skills practice.

Self awareness and reflection are central to learning within this course and should complement the other methods of teaching and learning.

The course is aimed at postgraduate level.

### Training Objectives

The training aims to develop:

- Awareness of and development of own attachment with nature
- Understanding of how we as practitioners and our clients can benefit from using nature as a therapy room
- Experience of using nature in an applied way within client work
- An understanding of the therapeutic relationship in nature-based work
- Theoretical understanding of Nature Allied Psychotherapy
- Consideration and understanding of issues relating to frame, process, boundaries and risks in Nature Allied Psychotherapy
- Understanding and experience of using nature as and within interventions
- Understanding of issues relating to safety and ethics in Nature Allied practice

### Learning Outcomes

- to develop or move towards positive attachment with nature
- be able to hold boundaries without the marker of a room
- competency in guiding the process of nature allied psychotherapy
- be able to listen to nature whilst listening to a client
- be able to listen to a client whilst listening to nature
- establish therapeutic relationship in allegiance with client and nature
- consider and assess risks in natural settings
- work within their competencies
- assess clients attachment style to nature
- understand level of challenge for client in being in nature
- understand how to integrate nature within current modalities practised
- be able to apply nature-based approaches and interventions
- have awareness of differing cultural perspectives about nature
- to apply ethnographic principles in their approach to exploration of clients experience

## Assessment

### Certificate level

Students are expected to commit to attending all training dates, attendance of 85% of training weekends is required.

Summative assessment of;

- personal awareness and readiness to practice
- applied practice
- theoretical knowledge

### Diploma level

Students are expected to commit to attending all training dates, attendance of 85% of training weekends is required.

Assessment on the course is both formative and summative.

Students will be assessed for their;

- personal awareness and readiness to practice
- applied practice
- theoretical knowledge

The assessment consists of;

- Two personal process summaries, approximately 600 words or 2 x A4 pages
- Student Presentation
- One tape of recorded session
- 4000 word essay
- 25 client hours

## Course dates

April 2021 – February 2022;

The course takes place over 6 residentials throughout the year. Final course work submission is due in February 2022.

23-25 April 2021

28-30 May 2021

25-27 June 2021

23-25 July 2021

24-26 September 2021

29-31 October 2021

## Venue

Our main venue is Frylands Wood, a 60 acre ancient woodland in south Croydon. We may also use alternative local sites including South Norwood Lake and Grounds a 28 acre park with lake and woodland.

Addresses;

- Frylands Wood, Featherbed Lane, Croydon, CR0 9AA
- South Norwood Lake and Grounds, Woodvale Avenue, South Norwood, London SE25 4AN

East Croydon is a transport hub for both locations, both venues are approximately a 10 minute drive from East Croydon.

## Accommodation

Students will camp during the residentials in our beautiful woodland site.

## Programme Leader

Beth Collier (M.A., MBACP), is a Nature Allied Psychotherapist, Supervisor and Researcher who teaches woodland living skills and natural history.

As a therapist and supervisor she sees all her clients and supervisees outdoors, using natural settings as therapeutic spaces and working in allegiance with nature to explore our emotional worlds. She started to work with clients within nature in 2012 and since 2014 has only offered nature-based sessions. Beth has theorised our relationships with nature from an applied psychotherapeutic perspective, developing Nature Allied Psychotherapy as a modality of practice for ongoing client work. Her book *Nature Allied Psychotherapy; Exploring Relationships with our Selves, Others and Nature* will be published by Routledge in 2021. Beth has a B.A. (Joint hon.) in Comparative Religion and Social Anthropology, an M.A. in Psychotherapy and Counselling and an M.A. in Human Rights.

Beth is a naturalist and bushcraft practitioner with an interest in traditional ecological knowledge and ethnopsychology. She enjoys natural navigation, tracking and basketry and has experience of wilderness living in Scotland and Sweden. Beth has a certificate in Advanced Wilderness First Aid. She has a life long passion for nature stemming from a rural upbringing.

Beth is the Founder of [Wild in the City](#), an organisation supporting the well-being of urban residents through connection with nature, offering experiences in woodland living skills, natural history and ecotherapy; using the skills of our ancestors to nurture a deeper connection with the natural world and a sense of belonging to communities past and present.

Beth is a Fellow of the [National Association for Environmental Educators](#), a Fellow of the London Environmental Educators Forum and a visiting lecturer at the [Wellbeing Faculty](#) of the Institute for Arts in Therapy and Education. She is a former Trustee of the [National Park City Foundation](#).

## Admission Criteria

This course is suitable for qualified counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists and psychiatrists who have already completed a post-graduate diploma or similar, in counselling and psychotherapy. Trainees in their final year of a post-graduate diploma may apply but the Diploma in Nature Allied Psychotherapy cannot be awarded until the external qualifying post graduate training has been awarded. Entry is by application.

## Application Process

Candidates should complete the application form and submit it along with their CV.

Subject to their application form, candidates will be invited to an interview with two panellists. During the interview the applicants' professional experience, self awareness and affinity with nature will be taken into account.

There is a £60 interview fee to cover expenses.

## Fees

### Certificate

The course fee is £2200, payable in full or four instalments of £550.50

Places booked by 31st January will receive a 10% early bird booking discount, £1980.

### Diploma

The course fee is £2750, payable in full or 6 instalments of £458.33

Places booked by 31st January will receive a 10% early bird booking discount, £2475.

## Open day

An open day will be held on 5 September 2020, 10am - 1.00pm. Open days are an opportunity to meet the tutor, visit the venue and hear more about the syllabus and structure of the course.

Booking is essential, please email Kike at [hello@naturetherapyschool.com](mailto:hello@naturetherapyschool.com) to confirm open day attendance and receive further details.

## Course Contact details

Course Administrator: Kike Ojo  
[hello@naturetherapyschool.com](mailto:hello@naturetherapyschool.com)  
[www.naturetherapyschool.com](http://www.naturetherapyschool.com)