



Tree of Life: Parent/Carer Support Space

In partnership with Our Voice, EPS (Enfield Educational Psychology Service) would like to offer parents and carers the opportunity of confidential space and a time away from their busy lives to reflect and feel restored and empowered in their parenting/family journeys.

A small group of parents can join a 6-week online course, along with Seema Islam (Our Voice Lead) and Claire Collins (Educational Psychologist & Systemic Family Practitioner) where they will be guided in structured sessions to rediscover their histories and roots, recounting the rich resources which they have been equipped with over the years to support them. We will explore these **strengths and how they have been drawn upon, along with networks of support, in order to manage life's challenges**. We will explore hopes and challenges and what we've learnt along the way to weather the storms in life.

Aims

- Learn about and increase awareness of your own strengths and skills
- Become more aware of your hopes and values and how to achieve your goals.
- Create a story of your future hopes as you would like them to be
- Enhance your wellbeing through a safe therapeutic retail space.

How

Using the metaphor of a tree, we will explore the origin of your strengths. We will connect as a group to appreciate each person's unique contribution to their story, further strengthening and affirming a sense of hope.

When

Join a series of six x 1-hour small group online workshops via Zoom on the following dates: **Thursdays at 10.30 to 11.30 am on 10th, 17th & 24th June and 1st, 8th and 15th July** followed by a celebration event **on Thursday 22nd July**. (If possible, and participants agree, some of the later sessions may be held face-to-face).

Facilitators

Sessions led by Claire Collins (Educational Psychologist and Systemic Practitioner) and supported by Seema Islam, Chair of Our Voice.

Previous feedback

'Mentally this group helped me to have a positive mindset, it might be challenging but we are going to get there'.

'This group helped me to know myself and learn how to manage my emotions'

'I would definitely recommend the training to other parents. the group was very supportive and I enjoyed the discussions'

To join the group, please register [here](#).

Numbers will be strictly limited so please register as soon as possible. After your registration you will receive an email with joining instructions (if spaces are available) or will be added to the waiting list.



What is Narrative Therapy Practice? The idea behind Narrative Therapy Practice is to provide **enrichment in one's sense of wellbeing** and to offer a space where this is amplified within the group. We also reflect upon how the "meanings that we attribute to events/life can determine how we behave" (White & Epston, 1990). It offers an intervention of hope, which encourages a move away from negative 'problem-focused thinking' **to give a new space where we can think, talk about and listen to ideas about strengths and preferred ways of being**, thereby challenging less helpful stereotypes and ways of thinking.

Feedback from parents who attended this group recently in Enfield is shared below:

What did you learn from attending the training and what has been the impact upon your emotional well-being?

Remembering Internal Resources

- *'It made me think back to who I am and that I am not defined by the present, I have a rich past culturally which is full of important people who guided and influenced me.'* (Two other members of the group agreed that they had not thought about this, but it had been empowering to reach back into their past and remember what they had learnt to make them strong).
- *'It made me remember a simple story from childhood where a man was lost looking everywhere for help, an older person said to me – 'he only needs to ask and he will get help'. Attending this training put me back in touch with this idea, 'Don't be afraid to ask for help.'*

A Sense of Belonging

- *'We are all feeling like we are the only ones struggling, and this makes you feel very alone. However, knowing that other people have similar challenges and struggles somehow makes it ok to feel like I do. I feel better about myself having attended the group.'*
- *'It was great to work in pairs and learn how similar and connected we are as people. It is very isolating when your child has special needs as you don't see parents at drop-offs and picks-ups at school.'*
- *'It was great to have an opportunity to meet other people whose children have special needs to learn about our different backgrounds and share our goals.'*
- *'The group was a safe space where we could share our feelings and feel heard.'*
- *'It was helpful to have structure and at the same time it was flexible to enable us to have a voice, to be heard to share our challenges in this context.'*

The group felt in agreement that the sessions provided a reflective space to meet, they wanted more meetings to connect together.

Re-storying our Lives

- *'We actually got strengths from each other through this training.'*
- *'Mentally this group helped me to have a positive mindset, it might be challenging but we are going to get there.'*
- *'This group helped me to know myself and learn how to manage my emotions.'*
- *'I would definitely recommend the training to other parents the group was very supportive, and I enjoyed the discussions.'*

For further information please contact Claire.collins@enfield.gov.uk