

A Compassion Focused Approach to Working with Carers

With Dr Magdalene Sampson and Dr Ken Goss

Compassion Focused Therapy PGDip, University of Birmingham

In this workshop, participants will be introduced to the theory and model of Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), and consider how this could be applied to understanding and working with carers, particularly in group settings.

Caring for people who have physical and/or mental health difficulties can be an opportunity to experience the joy that being compassionate can bring, but can also be very challenging and stressful. Often carers describe feeling burnt out, and can be very self-critical of their feelings in this role (such as frustration, anger, sadness, and grief) They can also describe feeling alone, isolated and conflicted in the roles and relationships they have with the people they are caring for and with services.

Compassion Focused Therapy was developed to address these difficulties for people with mental and physical health difficulties. In this workshop we will explore how this model has been used by people working with carers.

During the workshop we will address:

- Common emotional experiences that can negatively impact on a carers ability to care for others and themselves
- How to help carers develop a compassionate understanding of the difficulties they may experience in this role.
- Ways to help carers develop their compassionate self and self-compassionate to help them manage their feelings and become more effective and fulfilled in their caring role
- How to explore and work with common blocks carers experience to being compassionate and self-compassionate
- How to develop Compassion Focused group programmes for carers.

The workshop will include practical experience of some of the compassionate mind training exercises, didactic teaching and group discussion.

This workshop would be suitable for people who have an interest in, or are currently working with carers.

The workshop will briefly cover the fundamental principles of Compassion Focused Therapy but will assume some prior knowledge. Those new to the

approach would benefit from visiting www.compassionatemind.co.uk for a more detailed understanding prior to attending the workshop.

Dr Magdalene Sampson

Dr Magdalene Sampson is a Clinical Psychologist. Her current post is as a Clinical Psychologist and Acting Service Manager at Greater Manchester West Mental Health Foundation Trust Eating Disorder Service.

Magdalene has worked in a specialist Eating Disorder Service for 15 years. She trained with Dr Ken Goss in CFT-E in 2010 and been running CFT-E groups for individuals with a range of eating disorder presentations since this time. She has had a long standing interest in working with carers and developed a Compassionate Mind Training group programme for carers. This which was piloted in 2014 and found to be a very effective intervention that carers valued. The intervention and results were presented at the CFT Conference November 2014 and in the process of submission for publication..

Dr Ken Goss

Dr Ken Goss is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Head of Coventry Eating Disorders Service in the UK. He leads an on-going research programme exploring shame, self-criticism and compassion and their relationship to mental health. Ken is the Course Director of the University of Birmingham Post Graduate Diploma training course in CFT.

Ken is a regular speaker at national and international conferences, and teaches on several Clinical Psychology Training Courses. He has worked closely with Professor Paul Gilbert (OBE), the originator of Compassion Focused Therapy, for over 20 years. He is a Board Member of, and trainer for, the Compassionate Mind Foundation

Suggested pre-course reading:

- Gilbert, P. (2009). *The Compassionate Mind. A New Approach to the Challenges of Life*. London: Constable & Robinson.
- Gilbert, P. (2010). *Compassion Focused Therapy. Distinctive Features*. London: Routledge.
- Gilbert, P. (ed.). (2010). *Compassion Focused Therapy: Special Issue. International Journal of Cognitive Therapy*. 3, 97-201