

One-Day SETAC Conference

A day of learning, connection and vocational development

Saturday 7 November 2026

Elm House, University of Brighton

In association with Connexus Institute

08:30 - 09:30

Registration

Tea, coffee and pastries

09:30 - 09:45

Conference Opening

Organising Committee

Welcome and introduction to the day

09:45 - 10:45

Opening Plenary

Rachel Cook, TSTA, CTA (Psychotherapy), MSc, MA, PGCE

"Showing Up as Ourselves: An Existential View of Self-Disclosure in Practice"

10:45 - 11:15

Morning Break

Tea, coffee and biscuits

11:15 - 12:30

Morning Workshops

Choose one of four parallel sessions (75 mins)

Option A

Dr Helena Hargaden

Searching for Normal

Option C

Cazzy Stilwell, TSTA, CTA(P)

Beyond the Sandtray

Option B

Amanda Bradley, CTA(P)

The Business of Therapy

Option D

Peter Golder, CTA(P)

LGBTQ+ Affirmative Practice

12:30 - 14:00

Lunch

14:00 - 15:15

Afternoon Workshops

Choose one of four parallel sessions (75 mins)

Option A

Dr Hulya Hooker, PhD

Research Without Fear

Option C

Holly Simmonds

Minding the Gaps

Option B

Nancy Dalton, CTA(P)

Client Assessment

Option D

Julie Shepherd and Emma Castledine

Neuroinclusive Practice

15:15 - 15:45

Afternoon Break

Tea, coffee and biscuits

15:45 - 16:45

Closing Panel

Mandy Atkinson, TSTA and Patrick Brook, TSTA (with presenters from the day)
"Getting More from Training, Supervision, and Beyond"

16:45 - 17:00

Conference Close

Organising Committee
Reflections and farewell

Workshop Details

Morning Workshops (11:15 - 12:30)

Please choose only one from the following four

"Searching for Normal: What Timimi's Challenge Means for Relational Practice"

Dr Helena Hargaden, DPsych, MSc, TSTA (Psychotherapy)

Sami Timimi's book "Searching for Normal" asks uncomfortable questions about the diagnostic frameworks we've all grown up with professionally. If mental health categories are culturally constructed, politically shaped, and commercially driven, what does that mean for how we sit with our clients? And what happens when we stop reaching for a label and start reaching for the person? This workshop puts Timimi's critique into conversation with relational psychotherapy. His argument, that distress is better understood through context, culture, and relationship than through diagnosis, resonates deeply with the relational tradition. Helena draws on her own work at the intersection of transactional analysis and relational psychoanalysis to explore what it means to hold a client's experience without the scaffolding of diagnostic certainty. This isn't a workshop about abandoning all frameworks. It's about examining which ones serve the relationship, and which ones get in the way.

"The Business of Therapy: What They Don't Teach You in Training"

Amanda Bradley, CTA (Psychotherapy)

Our qualification frameworks expect professional competence, including clear business contracting. Yet most training focuses on the consulting room, not what actually surrounds it. We're often left to muddle through the commercial, legal, and administrative foundations of running a practice. Amanda Bradley brings a unique perspective: twenty years in corporate finance before retraining as a therapist. This workshop draws on both worlds, helping you think through what a sustainable practice actually looks like and offering space to ask the questions you might not have felt you were able to raise elsewhere.

"Beyond the Sandtray: What Does Working Creatively Actually Mean?"

Cazzy Stilwell, TSTA, CTA (Psychotherapy)

When people talk about creative practice, they often picture sandtrays and art materials. But what if your therapy takes place in a context with little beyond a room and two chairs? Creativity appears in our qualification criteria, yet the meaning of it is rarely unpacked. What does it actually mean to work creatively? This workshop challenges assumptions and explores how to access creativity with whatever you have. Including the most important resource: yourself.

"Scripting, Culture, and Sexual Orientation: A Framework for LGBTQ+ Affirmative Practice"

Peter Golder, CTA (Psychotherapy)

While "LGBTQ+ affirmative practice" is central to modern ethical codes, its clinical application may trigger anxiety for some practitioners. But what does the term actually mean? And why do so many therapists, particularly those who don't identify as LGBTQ+ themselves, still feel uncertain enough to refer this work elsewhere? This workshop, provided by a therapist from the LGBTQ+ community, provides a robust framework for understanding affirmation as an active relational process. Drawing on the TA concept of Script and Pearl Drego's model of Cultural Scripting, we explore how heteronormative and cisnormative scripting function as powerful introjected social constructs, and acknowledge what this may mean for our clinical work. We'll also look at what constitutes good and bad practice, and how our own cultural scripts may be shaping our responses in ways we haven't yet noticed.

Afternoon Workshops (14:00 - 15:15)

Please choose only one from the following four

"Research Without Fear: A Practical Introduction"

Dr Hulya Hooker, PhD

There's a myth that engaging with research means doing research. Designing studies, writing papers, collecting data. Most practitioners don't need to do any of that. What they need is to be confident consumers of research: able to find it, read it critically, and know what to trust. This workshop is for anyone who feels uncertain about research. We'll explore what it actually is, why it matters for practice, and how you can engage with it without ever running a study yourself.

"The Art and Skill of Client Assessment"

Nancy Dalton, CTA (Psychotherapy)

Assessment is an ongoing process, though those early sessions in any therapy do carry particular weight. You're building rapport while gathering information. Forming impressions, making judgements, working out whether this is someone you can help. And it goes both ways: you're also creating space for the client to decide whether they can and want to work with you. What should you actually be looking for? How do you think diagnostically while staying relational? This workshop offers a practical framework for thinking about assessment, with tools and ideas you can apply directly in practice.

"Minding the Gaps: A Five-Gap Model for Understanding Professional Vulnerability"

Holly Simmonds, BSc Hons., UKCP Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapist, Clinical Supervisor, UKATA Advanced Practitioner, NCPS Senior Accredited Registrant

Our qualification frameworks expect ethical competence, self-awareness, and an understanding of our own limitations. But how do we actually notice when we're becoming vulnerable in our practice? Holly Simmonds introduces her Five-Gap Model, a framework for identifying the areas where practitioners are most at risk of ethical difficulty. From unresolved personal material to role conflation, from knowledge gaps to organisational pressures and under-resourcing, this workshop offers a practical tool you can use wherever you are in your training or career, across several contexts.

"Neuroinclusive Practice"

Julie Shepherd, and Emma Castledine, Integrative Humanistic Psychotherapist, EMDR Practitioner, Clinical Supervisor

Neurodivergence covers a vast and varied landscape. There's no single profile, no universal set of accommodations, no checklist that works for everyone. Our frameworks ask for sensitivity to diversity, but what does that actually look like when every neurodivergent client is different? This workshop is designed to meet you wherever you are on that journey. We'll explore how to create space for discovery rather than assumption, how to negotiate what works without imposing, and how to notice your own ableism, and your client's internalised version of it. We'll also consider where TA theory might need revisiting in an ND context. The aim isn't expertise. It's a willingness to learn alongside your clients.