

sequelae of abuse.

Relationships between analyst and patient are voluntarily entered into, confidential, ethically and professionally boundaried and, if there is a good enough fit between the two, last for a long time. Initial assessment is often more by listening than by taking a history, though usually some points in a narrative require clarification. There will be negotiation of session times, fees and explanations about breaks and holidays.

Key points in an assessment are the person's degree of psychological mindedness, capacity to reflect on their own experience and signs of some ability to respond to the holding and containing offered by the analytic frame. And, inevitably, the ability to pay — say an average of £30 per session,

three times a week — about £4,000 a year.

Many users of BAP therapists are themselves therapists, counsellors or involved in helping professions — social work, probation, medicine, teaching. It would be neither possible nor helpful to give a list of pathologies, inclusion or exclusion criteria, as each person and their circumstances require an individualised response. Who gets analytic therapy in the UK depends upon the setting — NHS, child guidance centres, social service departments, university counselling centres, GP surgeries, schools or private practice. There are geographical problems too — NW3 and its immediate environs contain a large number of members, whereas there are hardly a handful in Manchester. Though hopefully this will change.

## ***The Experience of Training, and the Afterlife***

*Marilyn Mathew*

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**T**raining with the BAP was certainly an experience I shall never forget. It stretched my mind, prepared me for working as an analyst, gave me a qualification and in the process took me into some thoroughly murky and uncharted areas. In those previously unexplored depths of myself I found monsters and treasures I'd never dreamed of. But on reflection, if I'd known at the beginning of the training what lay ahead, would I have dared embark on the journey? Perhaps I should start at the beginning . . .

I should make it clear that this is my tale and is a purely subjective account of training with the Jungian section of the BAP. How typical or exceptional it is, I really am not sure. A dynamic eruption of dreams and physical illness first plunged me into imagining myself as a Jungian analyst. My rational mind said 'No way! Too expensive! They'll never have you!' but the unconscious kept on sending messages I simply could not ignore. Eventually, I realised there was only one way to go. Within a month I'd found a training analyst and in

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the darkness of my psyche the cogs began to whirr.

When it came to training, the first hurdle was the application form. I came from a medical family with a strong spiritual base but I'd gone to art school and later become involved in teaching NCT (National Childbirth Trust) groups. I wasn't sure I'd be suitable, but hope lay in the small print, the magical words 'in exceptional circumstances'.

Two interviews were followed by an interminable wait, but one day I bounced on to my analyst's couch with a triumphant 'I'm in!' For me, one of the most important moments in the training was being accepted and having my potential recognised.

Seven of us began the training, four of us completed/survived it. In many ways our year group were guinea pigs, as both BAP and the Jungian training were entering a period of enormous change. A two year infant observation course had become a requirement and we were offered an extra fourth year of theoretical seminars.

The demands of the training were time-consuming, and I began to spend a lot of time in the car, travelling at the peak 250 miles a week. BAP had not then acquired its home in Mapesbury Road, Kilburn, so there were new areas of London to get lost in, and there was also the fascinating experience of visiting the different consulting rooms of our various tutors.

Underpinning the training, then as now, is its most essential requirement, a minimum of three times weekly analysis. All the other important elements, the theoretical, clinical and infant observation seminars, the reading, discussing, thinking, writing and the working under

supervision with two training patients feed into this vital relationship. It is a private and personal experience which was referred to obliquely throughout our training with a quiet respect for the tussles, traumas and regressions of a process in which we were all sharing collectively.

In the training there were some surprises and disappointments in store for me as well as delights. Being immersed in Jungian ideas, talking about dreams and exploring the shades of the underworld was wonderful, like finding myself truly at home. Not all of us however were as much in love with Jung as I, and there were times when I felt the mythical intangible world of imagining was threatened, our group inclining toward a Kleinian, developmental stance.

Surprises: working with my two training patients and two supervisors. I somehow hadn't expected this to be as powerful or rewarding as it turned out to be. Working with my first training patient in particular stirred up depths I felt almost destroyed me. There were times during this period when I lost all faith and my internal image of myself became a desert. It lasted for months, only to be followed by a state of crucifixion which lasted even longer. These are graphic and dreadful images and I hesitate to include them, but a picture of the experience of training would be dishonest without them. And paradoxically there came with them a new capacity to feel and endure.

Disappointments: attention to the group process was hopeless. It's true that it would have been hard to find more time in a packed syllabus to deal with this, but there were tutors who were comfortable with facilitating us as group and those who were clearly happier in a one-to-one.

Perhaps it is easier now that BAP has a home and a common room — our group discussions after seminars tended to be snatched on the pavement!

Delights: the two years I spent observing a little girl from birth were a real surprise. It had a profound impact on my personal analysis, provided a marvellous safe place to play with ideas and fantasies, sharpened up my perceptive powers and brought together the developmental and archetypal worlds which I had been struggling to relate.

Analysis and the training are intensely consuming and there is a danger that other aspects of life can really suffer. I became so preoccupied and absorbed with my own interior that I neglected my friends and family and became murder to live with. Fortunately the demands of my children kept my feet near the ground and thankfully my husband had been through an analysis himself. He hung on tight while I went wild, but our relationship underwent severe testing. I remember complaining to my analyst that the process should have a health warning. 'Surely you knew of the risks?' she replied. No I didn't! And maybe it should!

Meanwhile the seminars ticked on, spiralling through Jungian and post-Jungian thoughts with a fair smattering of psychoanalytic theories thrown in. They provided a regular and reliable framework,

demanding that I awaken rusty thinking powers. This was an important safety mechanism for me, and it did seem strange that in the midst of an emotional hurricane it was possible to find an eye of clear thought.

The climax of the training were writing the final paper, the viva and the 'reading in' ceremony. Most of my colleagues were keen to finish and leave. I was not. My analyst was retiring, and having my paper accepted would mean the end of my therapy, the supervisions and the structured week that had become so familiar. I felt abandoned by everyone and wished there had been a 'buddy' alongside for the first six months of swimming on my own.

Gradually confidence, and my practice, have grown, and I have not stopped learning. The BAP has a wealth of interesting activities, as well as a number of courses for professional development. There is a healthier, more holistic balance in my life now and time to pay a more relaxed attention to the cooker if it needs cleaning or the garden if the roses need pruning.

On reflection, there are a few experiences in my life thus far that have really touched the heart of my soul: the birth of children, a devoted love and a good death amongst them; and now my analysis, and the experience of training. My dreams promised diamonds in the mud and luckily, at the end of it all, I have found some.

