
MARLENE DU PLESSIS

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Highly skilled **counselling therapist and facilitator** with over 20 years of experience specialising in trauma-informed therapy and integrative therapeutic approaches. Originally from South Africa and now based in the UK, I have worked extensively in clinical and community settings, supporting adults and young individuals with complex psychiatric diagnoses.

My background includes working alongside a clinical psychologist at a psychiatric step-down facility, where we combined **traditional therapy with experiential modalities**, such as Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy. I also served as a **senior therapeutic facilitator** in an **Equine-Assisted Life Skills program** at a **remedial school** and contributed to **Youth at Risk** group programs. Since relocating to the UK in 2020, I have focused on conventional therapeutic methods for both children and adults. Beyond clinical practice, I have held **leadership roles** in the **non-profit sector**, playing a key role in the **development, growth, and management** of an international **not-for-profit school sports organisation**.

Currently, I run a **private practice**, specialising in **complex trauma, dissociative disorders, anxiety, depression, and ADHD**, offering individual therapy, group facilitation, and workshops. Additionally, I work as a sessional therapist for an external organisation.

Before relocating I was actively involved in the **development and delivery of training programs** and educational sessions on the **neuro-biopsychology of trauma**, as well as **animal-assisted, and creative therapeutic interventions**. I provided training to **professionals and individuals seeking trauma-informed therapeutic insights**, ensuring best practices in the field.

Skills summary

Development, Coordination, and Growth Skills

- **Holistic systems thinker**, adept at integrating and optimising processes while recognising the interconnectedness of human and environmental factors.
- **Highly adaptable**, capable of working independently or within multidisciplinary teams to drive success.
- **Strategic and analytical approach**, balancing a big-picture perspective with meticulous attention to detail to identify patterns, discrepancies, and opportunities.
- **Creative problem-solver**, leveraging innovation to develop effective solutions and achieve organisational objectives.
- **Dedicated to delivering high-quality outcomes**, with a strong focus on continuous improvement and sustainable growth.
- **Passionate about knowledge-sharing**, inspiring and motivating teams to collaborate and excel.

Leadership and Relational Skills

- **Thrive in dynamic, initiative-driven environments** that foster creativity, problem-solving, and forward-thinking leadership.
- **Experienced in guiding individuals through self-discovery**, helping them uncover values, strengths, and areas for growth while fostering resilience and purpose.
- **Culturally competent and adaptable**, with a proven ability to work across diverse communities and global settings.
- **Effective and empathetic leader**, combining strategic vision with motivation, mentorship, and a commitment to excellence.

Core Values

- Integrity, honesty, fairness, and trust.
- Flourish in environments that **encourage flexibility, innovation, and proactive leadership**.

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS

** NCPS (Reg: 21-00577) (Accredited) ** NCIP (Reg: 362222) ** BPS (544803) ** BACP (Reg: 391013)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Microsoft Office: Word | Excel | PowerPoint | Adobe Photoshop | Website builders | Content/Client Management Systems (CMS)
Fluent in both **English** and **Afrikaans**

WORK HISTORY

Independent Counselling Therapist and Facilitator, 2010 - Current

The ReStorying Space (incorporated equusLINK)

- Trauma-informed pluralistic counsellor and psychotherapist, specialising in experiential modalities, including equine-assisted therapy, and various creative therapeutic approaches.
- Holistic, person-centred, and trauma-sensitive practitioner, dedicated to fostering resilience, emotional well-being, and personal growth.
- Committed to client empowerment, facilitating informed decision-making and meaningful life changes through tailored therapeutic interventions.
- Designed and led innovative workshops integrating equine-assisted activities, and various creative modalities to support emotional well-being and personal development.
- Extensive experience in multidisciplinary psychiatric settings, co-delivering psychosocial programs for neurodivergent students and individuals with diverse psychological needs.
- Skilled in working with multicultural populations across various age groups, demonstrating adaptability and cultural sensitivity in dynamic therapeutic environments.
- Experienced in both individual and group therapy settings, utilising a tailored, evidence-based approach to support client needs effectively.

Sessional Therapist, Jan 2022 – March 2024

Integrate Families - Manchester

- Experienced counsellor with a strong ability to integrate theoretical counselling approaches into practical, real-world applications.
- Specialised in supporting adults and young people (18+) navigating complex trauma, dissociative disorders, anxiety, depression, relational challenges, and psychosocial life skills development.
- Collaborates with multidisciplinary healthcare teams to develop and implement holistic, client-centred treatment plans.
- Conducts comprehensive client assessments, including in-depth interviews, to identify symptoms, gather case histories, and tailor effective therapeutic interventions.

Program Coordinator and Facilitator, 1991 - 2019

Self (designLINKS/SANESA) - South Africa

- Led and managed projects with full accountability, overseeing operational planning, program development, and execution across both business and non-profit sectors.
- Demonstrated expertise in research, strategic planning, and organizational leadership, leveraging critical thinking, analytical skills, and problem-solving abilities.
- Evaluated and enhanced ongoing programs by providing strategic recommendations, ensuring alignment with organisational goals and stakeholder needs.
- Supervised and coordinated a team of 140+ volunteers, delivering training and fostering engagement to uphold the organisation's mission and vision.
- Established and maintained strategic partnerships with key stakeholders in education and political sectors within the non-profit industry.
- Developed and implemented efficient systems, procedures, and workflows to ensure compliance with legal and policy frameworks.
- Recognised for creativity, innovation, and the ability to develop original solutions that drive meaningful impact.

EDUCATION SUMMARY

Certification: CCFT, 2023

Registered Forensic Test User (psychometrist)

Advanced assessment of Personality, Psychopathology and Risk Assessment.

Master of Science: Psychology, 2022

University of Essex – United Kingdom – (distinction)

Thesis: Your trauma – My trauma: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis exploring the Lived Experiences of Adoptive Parents of Children with Complex Trauma and Trauma-related Dissociative Behaviours.

Certification: EMDR, 2022

London School of Clinical Communication & Hypnoses - United Kingdom

Level 4 Diploma: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, 2022

Fortis Therapy and Training - Lincolnshire
NCPS accredited.

Level 5 Diploma: Person Centred Psychotherapy and Counselling, 2022
Supporting Minds - Lincoln

Clinical Diplomat Level 7: Logotherapy, 2016
University of South Africa - South Africa - (distinction)

Bachelor (Hons): Landscape Architecture, 1988
University of Pretoria - South Africa

Some Additional Certification

IFS Immersion – comprehensive foundation in the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model (Kylie Feller)

Deep Brain Reorienting (DBR) (Drs Frank Corrigan / Jessica Christie-Sands)

Understanding and Treating Disorganised Attachment and Dissociation (distinction)

Dissociation in Children and Adolescents Assessment and Treatment

Dissociation in Children and Adolescents: EMDR in children with complex trauma

Muss Rewind Therapy

Working with Self-destructive Behaviours

Working with Trauma in the Sand (Advanced)

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Learning (Advanced)

Animal Assisted Activities and Therapy (Advanced)

Current certification to be completed 2024-2025

Initiatic Art Therapy Certification (Institute for Sensorimotor Art Therapy)

Sandstory Skills® Trainer Certification Programme

Somatic and Interactive Trauma Training (SPIM30) (Dr Ralf Vogt (Austria))

I regularly attend post qualification short courses and trainings as part of the required continual professional development of the registration bodies I belong to. More information on request.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Course Development & Training:** Designed and delivered experiential-focused training programs, incorporating sensory engagement and visualization techniques for clients and professionals.
- **Academic Tutoring:** Tutor for Level 5 Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy at Supporting Minds Training.
- **Process & Data Management:** Expertise in case management, workflow optimization, data protection compliance, and advisory input in software development (CMS) to improve case management systems.
- **Marketing & Content Creation:** Developed marketing materials, including content writing and graphic design for printed media campaigns.
- **Organisational Growth & Development:** Played a key role in strategic planning, operational expansion, and leadership in various organisations.
- **Public Speaking & Presentations:** Presenter at conferences, sharing expertise on trauma-informed therapy, experiential therapeutic approaches, and related subjects.
- **Leadership & Governance:** Served as President of SANESA (2007–2015), leading a non-profit organisation through strategic growth and development initiatives.

INTERESTS

- **Human Psychology & Trauma Studies** – Special interest in the neuro-biopsychology of trauma and its impact on mental health.
- **Equestrian & Nature-Based Activities** – Passionate about horse riding and facilitating group therapy in equine and nature-assisted settings.
- **Travel & Cultural Exploration** – Enthusiastic about exploring new countries, cultures, and diverse perspectives.
- **Lifelong Learning & Personal Development** – Dedicated to continuous learning, reading, and acquiring new skills in psychology, therapy, and related fields.
- **Creative & Experiential Learning** – Enjoy integrating creative activities into learning environments, enhancing engagement and personal growth.