



MEANING OF THE CHILD INTERVIEW (MOTC) WITH THE DEVELOPERS AND EDUCATORS OF THE MEANING OF THE CHILD INTERVIEW (MOTC)

The Meaning of the Child Interview (MotC) is a method of understanding the parent-child relationship, through evaluating the way parents think about their child or children. It makes use of a semi-structured interview in which parents talk about their child, their relationship with their child, and their parenting, which is then carefully analysed using a manualised system. The MotC attends not just to the cognitive content of what the parent believes about their child and their parenting, but is a structured observation of a process in which the parent is required to regulate herself emotionally when thinking about her child and caregiving, and called to engage in reflection about the child, and his or her experience.

The concept of the Meaning of the Child was developed by applying the insights of attachment theory into the way parents self-protectively distort the meaning of their relationships and experience, to the insights of Reder and Duncan whose seminal studies in the 1990's of fatal child abuse highlighted the importance of attending to the particular psychological meaning that a child has for his or her parent(s), which in some cases led to the child's own identity becoming 'submerged' and the child becoming 'actors in someone else's play' (Reder and Duncan 1998, p.71)

The Meaning of the Child Interview differs from similar procedures by its focus on the nature of the parent-child relationship (rather than some attribute of the parent), as understood by how the parent thinks and talks about their child. For this reason, it is uniquely suited to helping understand what is going in specific parent-child relationships, and assessing risk to a particular child (or particular children, if the interview is conducted about multiple relationships) as well as the resilience of the parent-child relationship (Grey and Farnfield 2017a). It can be conducted with parents of any age child (even adult children) and about multiple children if required.

For further information, please see www.meaningofthechild.org

PAYMENT FOR THIS COURSE IS MADE UNDER THE FOLLOWING TERMS & CONDITIONS:

Courses are refundable up to 30 days prior to the date of the course. Any cancellation with less than 30 days notice are NON-REFUNDABLE. You may send a substitute delegate providing s/he meets the course criteria. We reserve the right to cancel the course date, in this case we will notify you by email as early as possible, and advise you of an alternative date or provide you with a full refund. In the event of a course cancellation under 7 days' notice, a new course date or refund will be organised for you. Under no circumstances are Beacon House are liable for any travel expenses, childcare, potential loss of income or any associated costs.



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AS A RESULT OF THE TRAINING ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Understand the significance of how parents speak and think about their child and their parenting
- Increase their awareness of the discourse that parents use (the words and emotional tone of the speech) to understand the underlying thinking that these indicate in parents
- Identify key 'discourse markers' and how these relate to underlying parental perceptions of their child and care-giving relationship
- Identify four main patterns of parent/child relationships and how these each impact on the child's experience
- Identify the difference between parent/child relationships that confer risk on the child's development and those that support a child's emotional and psychological development
- Investigate the concepts of mentalisation and reflective functioning and their importance in parenting and child development outcomes
- Understand the impact of unresolved trauma and loss on the ability of parents to provide sensitive care
- Identify the key indicators of change and the potential for parents to access therapeutic interventions
- Explore how interventions may be used and adapted to meet the needs of particular struggling parents
- Deliver the interview to parents so that it is ready for others to code
- Understand coding reports from external 'blind coders' for use in their clinical work with parents

IF PARTICIPANTS WISH TO ENGAGE IN FURTHER OPTIONAL HOME PRACTICE (SEE BELOW) THEY CAN BECOME RELIABLE IN THE MEASURE, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Reliably identify the four main patterns of parental care-giving behaviour (agreeing with other coders > 70%)
- Reliably identify the level of risk in a parenting interview (agreeing with other coders >70%)
- Use their interview codings in their own practice, to inform their work
- Offer a coding service to others as a 'blind coder' of interviews

ABOUT THE TRAINERS

Dr Ben Grey is a Senior Lecturer in Attachment Studies at the University of Roehampton, the only post-graduate programme on attachment in the UK. He is also a qualified social worker with over 20 years' experience in child protection and the assessment of troubled families. He has worked as a children's guardian and independent social worker, and is currently co-director of the Cambridge Centre for Attachment (www.attachment.services), offering expert witness services to the family courts, and consulting to Local Authorities, NHS CAMHS, voluntary organisations, and individual practitioners working in the field. He developed Meaning of the Child Interview (MotC) - a protocol for assessing how parent's think about their children and the impact this has on caregiving, and has trained on it with Juliet Kesteven around the country and abroad.

Juliet Kesteven is a qualified social worker with over 30 years' experience in working with children and families in the context of residential care, statutory field social work, community support and expert witness assessments for courts dealing with child protection. In 2005 -10 Juliet created and delivered the a diploma programme 'Postnatal group facilitation' for the National Childbirth Trust (NCT). She is currently co-director of the Cambridge Centre for Attachment. She is a Visiting Lecturer on the Attachment Studies programme at the University of Roehampton.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course consists of 6 days of face-to-face tuition, in 2 blocks of 3 days, and involves practice classification of interview transcripts, and email tuition, both within and following the course. Participants can then complete an optional reliability test to become reliable coders of the MotC. Learning the MotC to the level of reliability requires about 40-50 hours of individual practice classification of interviews (over an approximately 6 month period, both during and after the face-to-face course). However, many participants use the course to develop their understanding of the way parents think and talk about their children, without pursuing reliability in the procedure, finding the training nonetheless valuable to their development. Whilst training in delivering the interview itself is given, the course does not require participants to be in practice or submit their own case material, as the teaching is based around transcripts of interviews with parents carried out by the trainers and their colleagues.

Whilst the MotC has a solid foundation in academic research and psychological theory, particularly in the area of attachment and reflective functioning, it requires neither an academic background nor a psychological qualification to learn to use. It has been successfully taught to social workers, family centre workers, therapists, psychologists and psychiatrists alike.

Learning to classify parenting interviews using the MotC does require commitment and self-motivation to make use of the email tuition and practice, as it needs to be learned by 'doing' as well as by attending face-to-face training. It requires a willingness to engage with the theoretical content, but as a means to understanding particular parent-child relationships, rather than in the abstract.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Refreshments and lunch are provided, please notify us of any allergies.