

## **PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK: SPECIALIST COURSE IN COUPLE THERAPY**

The course was thoroughly enjoyable, challenging and inspiring. I use the skills gained from my attendance daily in my counselling practice.

**Jenny Cuthbertson**, *Psychologist, Private Practice*

The combination of experiential learning as well as theory was very valuable. Highly recommend the course for professionals in the field. I loved it.

**Catherine Stevenson**, *Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Therapist, Mental Health.*

Having worked as a relationship counsellor for three years, I was a bit skeptical about the benefits of doing the course but on the contrary found it to be highly interesting and challenging. I feel that it contributed to both a broadening and deepening of my clinical practice at the practice and theoretical levels and highly recommend the couple's counselling course to any clinician's interested in this area.

**David Luke**, *Psychologist/ Relationship Counsellor, Community Sector.*

Relationships Australia Victoria has provided me with useful tools and skills to assist me in my work. I use these tools extensively.

**Vivienne Colegrove**, *Family Counsellor/ Community Development Worker, Mental Health.*

The course enriched enormously my knowledge and understanding of both the art of marital therapy as well as the art of living with a partner.

**Guy Avisar**, *Psychologist, Private Practice*

The course, a good mix of theory and experiential work, gave me the knowledge base and skills to think about and begin working with couples. It also influenced my work with individuals. My interest in couples therapy has remained, my involvement with RAV's Group Supervision/Study Program helping me to further develop my skills in this challenging area.

**Joanne Mihelakos**, *Social Worker, Community Health.*

I found the course to be especially helpful to me in understanding and developing the links between my personal experience, the theoretical perspectives, and my work with couples. Since completing the course, my involvement with the Group/Supervision Study Program has proved invaluable in further integrating theory with my current couples counselling experience

**Max Broadway**, *Industrial Chaplain & Accredited Social Worker*

In choosing a course for my professional development my aim was to enhance and build on experience and theory that I was already using. Relationships Australia Victoria's Specialist Course in Couples Therapy brought contemporary and traditional theory into a setting that was practical and useful. The 12 month internship at RAV has offered me opportunity for further learning with a dynamic client base, a professional environment and excellent supervision support. My experience at RAV has enhanced my professional skills and confidence as well as bringing me into a strong network of colleagues and friends.

**Susan Sisko**, *Counsellor/Psychotherapist, Private Practice, Community Health.*

I found the course to be both professionally and personally enriching. Theoretical models provided a strong framework for navigating through complex relationship issues. A range of diverse reading material, group discussions and role plays further supported the integration of the course content.

**Joanne Heriot**, *Couples Counsellor, Private Practice*

I can say, without hesitation, that RAV's course was one of the most rewarding and stimulating aspects of my post-graduate education (Masters of Counselling & Human Services, La Trobe). Its organisation and structure was exceptional. The weekly reading material was extensive and provided the opportunity for thorough exploration of theory and practice, helping to extend both my theoretical knowledge, as well as assisting in utilising this in my therapeutic work with couples. The course provided excellent opportunities for reflection and clarification of the theories and techniques that were covered. The presenters themselves were thoughtful, energetic and supportive. The post course training and supervision options which I am currently involved in, namely the Group Supervision/Study Program and the Master Video Viewing Program, have been of enormous benefit in supporting my growing theoretical understanding of couple work and in integrating the material learned throughout the course.

**Judith Zuliani**, *Individual Therapist, Couple and Family Therapist, Private Practice.*

Even though I do not work as a couple therapist, I found the Specialist Course in Couple Therapy at Relationships Australia Victoria to be extremely helpful in my work as a family mediator. The knowledge gained through the well selected reading material, presentations and discussion as well as the focus on the 'therapeutic self' opened new areas of thinking and I now find that I have a broader and deeper theoretical as well as experiential platform from which to assist clients. I highly recommend this course.

**Tony Gee**, *Psychologist/Family Mediator, Family Law*

There is absolutely no comparison between undertaking this course and a two or three day workshop or even several. The depth of learning and the importance of a gradual building up of layers of understanding and skills, which can be reflected on during the week and brought back to further develop cannot be overestimated. I am so pleased with my decision to commit to this course and I have recommended it to many colleagues. The most obvious thing to say about the difference for me personally is that I relish the couple work instead of feeling unsure or wondering if I should feel unsure. The program was enjoyable and despite the long drive from Mornington I never wanted to miss any of it.

**Dale Halstead**, *Social Worker, Student Counsellor, Higher Education.*

The Specialist Couples Counselling course at Relationships Australia Victoria marked a profound shift in my practice as a couples and individual counsellor in the health sector. For the first time, I understood the concept of working with the dynamics and interactions between couples. Of particular benefit was a non-blaming, change oriented approach to psychodynamic theory. Of equal value has been my one year internship at RAV and current participation in the Group Supervision/Study Program. Both these processes have pushed me to not only understand new forms of practice but to practice them as well. I cannot recommend the course highly enough.

**Louise O'Byrne**, *Social Worker, Health Sector.*

This course, undertaken as a component of the Masters of Counselling & Human Services at La Trobe was extremely valuable primarily because the practical marital skills training was clearly underpinned by the rich theoretical component. The training also highlighted the importance of examination of the counsellor's use of self. My internship at RAV (Kew) consolidated the learning from the training and gave me the confidence to claim a level of competency as a couples counsellor in my counselling employment in community health.

**Chris Lye**, *Counsellor, Community Health Sector.*

I very much enjoyed and gained from the Specialist Couple in Couple Therapy. The work on “professional as a person” through the self-examining groups was invaluable and exciting.

**Debra Campbell**, Probationary Psychologist, Counsellor, Private Practice, Lecturer Higher Education Sector.

I found the Specialist Course in Couple Therapy to be wonderfully challenging, informative, fun and educational, guided along the way by highly skilled and inclusive practitioners. It was essential learning for me and I encourage anyone in my team, interested in couple work, to first undertake it. The course, which I completed as part of the Masters in Counselling & Human Services, La Trobe, is clearly one of the best I’ve ever participated in.

**Margaret Hodge**, Social Worker, Manager, Family Counselling Agency.

After I’d completed the Specialist Course in Couple Therapy at Relationships Australia Victoria, I realised I’d journeyed through greater understanding, self -development, personal pain and a hell a lot of reading material. It’s complex work that requires the specialist learning and training

**Louise O’Bryan**, Social Worker

The Specialist Course in Couple Therapy at RAV provoked me to rethink and re-evaluate my view about the very essence of the therapeutic work of counselling couples. I would highly recommend this course to any practitioner who is considering working with couples.

**Sue Beecher**, Social Worker, Family Counselling Agency.

**Trish Chapman**, Social Worker, Team Leader, Family Counselling Agency.

The course laid out sound theoretical foundations for an integrated model of working with couples. It provided practical guidance and enquiry, motivation and intellectual stimulation. The contributions of the facilitators and supervisors stand out. I appreciated their professionalism, competence, enthusiasm and support. Following the coursework, the internship and the Group Supervision/Study Program helped refine my thinking, ways of practice and provided new areas for discussion.