

The following information is to help you give informed consent about taking part in this research.

***Research Question: How do counsellors make meaning of their experiences growing up with an alcohol-dependent parent in their clinical practice?***

***Researcher:*** My name is Caroline Deans. I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student studying for a Masters in Professional Counselling at Waverley Abbey College.  
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***Background:*** My curiosity about this topic arose from reading Cozolino's observation that therapists often experienced addiction in their family when growing up. As an adult child of an alcoholic father, I was interested to explore how childhood wounds can become a source of healing, and in particular the potentially redemptive power of finding meaning in difficult experiences.

***Purpose of this study:*** To explore the dynamics of the relationship between growing up with an alcohol-dependent parent and working in clinical practice as a counsellor, by interviewing experienced counsellors who had an alcohol-dependent parent about the formative impact of those experiences, both on their counselling career journey and on their relational qualities as a counsellor; and how they make meaning of their childhood experiences in clinical practice.

***Participants:*** You are invited to participate in this study if you meet these criteria:

- Qualified counsellor based in the UK with current membership in an accredited body
- A minimum of 5 years post qualifying experience
- Currently or within the last year in clinical practice and supported by supervision
- Identify as having grown up with a parent who was an alcoholic
- Not in a current acute phase of psychological distress; this is to protect you from harm as the interview may touch on sensitive issues.

***What will happen if I take part?*** If you would like to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form (attached). Your involvement will be an interview lasting 45-60 minutes online. You would need to be in a private space where you won't be interrupted for the interview. The interview questions will be available for you to look at before the interview if you would find that helpful, but as the purpose is to explore and understand your experiences, the interview will be allowed to develop in a way that allows you to share your experiences freely. The interview will be audio-recorded and I will then transcribe it and analyse the content with the data from other participants using Reflexive Thematic Analysis to identify themes.

***What are the possible risks of taking part?*** In exploring potentially difficult experiences, there is a risk that participating in this study will evoke a strong emotional response. Your welfare is the priority. It is important that you feel safe enough to participate before starting the interview. If you become upset at any point, you are welcome to take a break, and you can decide to withdraw from the study. We will check in at the end of the interview about how you found the process and you will be given a debrief sheet, with information about where you can get further support afterwards.

***What are the possible benefits of taking part?*** I hope you will find the opportunity to share your experience helpful in making meaning of your own experiences. I also hope that the finished research study will shed light on this topic which could be of interest to a wider audience.

***If I agree to take part, can I change my mind?*** You have the right to withdraw from participation in the research at any time and withdraw consent without giving reason or explanation. After one to two weeks of completing the interview, transcription and analysis of the interview data will begin. Whilst every effort will be taken to remove all data if consent is withdrawn at any point after,

participants should be aware that it is usually impracticable to withdraw after in-depth analysis of the data and submission/publication of the research.

***Will my data and personal information be kept anonymous and confidential?*** I will allocate you a pseudonym, which will be used throughout the research to protect your anonymity. Any information which could identify you or any other people referred to in interviews will be removed. The audio recording of the interview and the transcript will be password protected and stored in Waverley Abbey College supplied personal cloud file storage area, and securely destroyed 18 months after completion of the study. There are situations where confidentiality cannot be maintained, such as an imminent safeguarding risk. I would try to discuss any need to break confidentiality with you, but this is not always possible.

***Who has reviewed the study?*** This research has been reviewed and granted ethical approval by the Waverley Abbey College Research Ethics Committee.

***How do I raise an issue or make a complaint if I am concerned?*** If you wish to raise a concern or complaint, please make contact with me, Caroline Deans via [caroline.deans@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.deans@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk). You are also welcome to raise a concern or complaint with my research supervisor, Caroline Wardle who can be contacted via [caroline.wardle@waverleyabbeycollege.org.uk](mailto:caroline.wardle@waverleyabbeycollege.org.uk) or the MA Programme Leader Dr Martin Stokley, who can be contacted via [martin.stockley@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:martin.stockley@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk). You can also discuss any concerns or make a formal complaint with the Chairperson of the Waverley Abbey College Research Ethics Committee Dr Martin Stokley who can be contacted via [martin.stockley@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:martin.stockley@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk). (For more information on the complaints procedures and policies, please contact Dr Martin Stokley).

***What code of ethics or ethical framework does the researcher have to abide by?*** I will abide by the Waverley Abbey College Research Ethics Policy and Procedures (a copy of the policy can be made available upon request), and the BACP Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions, available online: <https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/research/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-research-in-the-counselling-professions/>. Since not all ethical issues can be anticipated or resolved in the planning stages, I intend to work closely with a supervisor to ensure ethical issues are considered and addressed throughout the duration of the project.

***What will happen to the data I provide?*** Data collected will include audio recordings of interviews and transcripts. Minimal information about you (years of clinical practice and accredited body you are a member of) will be collected to check you meet the criteria for participating in the study. However, no information that could identify you or anyone you refer to in the interview will be included.

Your data will be processed in accordance with Waverley Abbey College's relevant data policies and procedures. For more information, please see the Data Privacy Notice below. You have the right to ask to see any information gathered on you by contacting me on [caroline.deans@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.deans@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk). You also have the right to ask for information which you believe to be incorrect to be rectified. If you are concerned about the way your information is being handled, please email Waverley Abbey Colleges Data Protection Officer at [simon.hawes@waverleyabbey.org](mailto:simon.hawes@waverleyabbey.org). If you are still unhappy you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. In line with Waverley Abbey College policy, on completion of the course (or exit of the course), any raw data, such as the audio recording, will be securely destroyed. The transcripts of the interviews will be kept for a period of 18 months after the end of the course by the researcher and then securely destroyed.