

WAVERLEY ABBEY COLLEGE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



**WAVERLEY  
ABBAY**

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**Research Participant Information Sheet**

The following information is provided to help you give informed consent should you wish to take part in the research.

**Research Question**

How do counsellors with different levels of experience help clients to build a continuing bond with the deceased in bereavement counselling?

**Researcher's name and contact details**

Name : Yan Allen

Programme: MA Professional Counselling: Theory and Practice

Email address: [Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.co.uk](mailto:Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.co.uk)

**Invitation**

Continuing bonds (CB) theory is a revolutionary concept when it first came out at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. My research will focus on what difference of impact the different levels of experience counsellors have to help clients to build a continuing bond with the deceased in bereavement counselling. I would like to invite you to take part in this research.

**What is the purpose of the study?**

This study is part of MA Professional Counselling: Theory and Practice. The research is designed to explore the application of CB theory by counsellors with different levels of experience in bereavement counselling practice.

**Why have I been approached?**

I plan to recruit two types of counsellors. Participants must be UK based, aged 18 and over. Group one: qualified counsellors with at least 10 years clinical experience, have registered in a recognised professional body (such as BACP, ACC, UKCP or equivalent), have worked with clients in bereavement counselling and utilized Continuing Bonds Theory. Group two: student counsellors, registered with a main UK governing body (such as BACP, ACC, UKCP or equivalent), working with clients in bereavement counselling and utilizing Continuing Bonds Theory.

**Do I have to take part?**

No. You are invited but not obliged to take part in. If you do decide to take part, you can withdraw any time without a reason.

### **What will happen if I take part?**

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to confirm that you have read this participant information sheet, then return a completed participant consent form by email. You will also be asked to confirm that you meet the participants criteria via a brief questionnaire. After this procedure, we will arrange a time mutually convenient for a one-to-one online interview via Microsoft Teams. The interview will be approximately 60 minutes. I will send you a secure Microsoft Teams link for the agreed time. At the beginning of the interview, I will check that you are at a private, uninterrupted space. You are free to pause, skip any questions and stop the interview at any time. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded encrypted via Teams. After the interview, I will transcribe the recording and analyse the data using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA).

### **What will it involve?**

- You need to have a device with Microsoft Teams installed for online interview.
- You need to have a private, uninterrupted space for the interview.
- One semi-structured interview will take place approximately 60 minutes.
- At the interview, you will be asked to talk about your experience of working with one or more clients using continuing bonds theory in bereavement counselling.
- No travel is required.
- No financial cost will occur to you, and you will not be paid.

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

The main potential risk of taking part is the risk of difficult feelings being evoked. You may experience anxiety, anger, sadness, distress by talking about your bereavement work. To help you to manage this:

- You will receive this information sheet and have opportunity to ask questions before deciding to participate.
- You will be able to pause, skip questions and stop anytime during the interview without a reason.
- I will be attentive and attuned throughout the interview. If I observe you being upset or having other difficult emotions, I will offer to pause, do a grounding technique together such as deep breathing, mindfulness, or end the interview if you want.
- At the end of the interview, I will provide a brief summary and a debrief information sheet.

In the event of the participant becoming distressed as a result of taking part in the research, you will be signposted to relevant support, such as your clinical supervisor, you GP, and details of how to find a counsellor via BACP/ACC/UKCP websites.

There is also a small risk of indirect identification. To reduce this risk, I will use pseudonyms and will generalise details (for example locations or agency names) in any written documents and the dissertation.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

You may find it helpful to have a dedicated time and space to talk about the counselling experience of working with bereaved clients for self-reflection and self-awareness. You may find this is an opportunity to add to the knowledge on applying continuing bonds theory into practice, to have a chance to discuss your professional experience in helping bereaved clients. However, I cannot guarantee your experience of personal benefits.

### **If I agree to take part, can I change my mind?**

Yes, you have the right to withdraw at any time. Participants can withdraw their 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?**

Yes, as far as possible. I will keep the data confidential, anonymous and secure. I will protect your identity by using pseudonyms, and any potentially identifying details (for example, locations, organisations, distinctive roles, rare combination of circumstances) will be removed or disguised in transcript and in the dissertation.

I will keep audio recordings, transcripts, field notes and anonymised data analysis only on my personal password protected laptop. Signed consent form and any documents containing your name and contact details will be stored separately from the interview data and will be linked by a pseudonymous participant ID. Any paper records will be stored in a locked cabinet at my home.

It is impossible to guarantee complete anonymity. I will take every reasonable measure to protect your anonymity and confidentiality.

### **What will happen to my data after I have taken part in the research?**

All your data will be kept confidential and anonymous through the use of pseudonyms. All identifying details will be changed in any interview transcripts. If there are direct quotes from participants are used in the final MA dissertation, they will be completely anonymous.

The dissertation will be submitted to Waverley Abbey College as part of my MA course and may be read by the internal and external examiners and stored in the college as paper or digital forms. Any future publication based on this research will use anonymous data only.

### **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 Yan Allen via [Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk) You are also welcome to raise a concern or complaint with my research supervisor, \_\_\_\_\_ who can be contact via \_\_\_\_\_, or the MA Programme Leader Dr Martin Stokley via \_\_\_\_\_

[martin.stokley@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:martin.stokley@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 contact via [martin.stokley@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:martin.stokley@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). I will adhere to the Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions and the Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), and to the Data Protection Act 2018.

**What will happen to the data I provide?**

The main data I am collecting will be:

- An audio recording of the interview and transcripts of the recording.
- Field notes about the interview content.
- Professional information, including a number of years practice as a qualified counsellor, your registration body (for example BACP, ACC, UKCP, other equivalent bodies), your main modality, and a brief description of your general practice context.

Your data will be processed and analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis for the purpose of my MA dissertation and will not be used for other purpose without your consent.

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 [Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:Yan.Allen@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 of the research 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.

**Waverley Abbey College - Research Data Privacy Policy**

**Our contact details:**

Waverley Abbey Trust  
Waverley Abbey House,  
Waverley Lane,  
Farnham,

Surrey,  
GU9 8EP  
Phone Number: +44 (0)1252 784 700

E-mail: [simon.hawes@waverleyabbey.org](mailto:simon.hawes@waverleyabbey.org)

### **What type of information is collected?**

As part of the course requirements in the final research module, the following information is collected and processed:

- Personal identifiers and characteristics, including name, professional role (counsellor/student counsellor), age, gender, professional registration body (e.g. BACP, ACC, UKCP), main therapeutic modality, approximate number of years in practice, general practice context.
- Contact details for use during the research process, including email address (and phone number if you like to provide one).
- In-depth interview data which will be audio recorded, a transcription of the recording will be created, and written responses to a questionnaire.

### **How we get the information and why we have it**

We use the information that you have given us for research purposes as part of the course requirements of the MA Professional Counselling: Theory and Practice. The personal information is used to complete the research on how do counsellors with different levels of experience help clients to build a continuing bond with the deceased in bereavement counselling.

The personal information we process is provided to us directly by you for one of the following reasons:

- As part of your participation my MA research project. The data will be collected, analysed and used solely for this research purpose.
- The data is collected via in-depth, semi-structured interviews that are audio recorded and a transcript is created from that recording, and via email communication.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the lawful bases we rely on for processing this information are:

**Your consent. You are able to remove your consent at any time. You can do this by contacting Yan Allen via [Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk).**

Whilst every effort will be taken to remove all data if consent is withdrawn at any point after the research interview, it may be impracticable to withdraw all data after in-depth analysis of the data has commenced, and impractical to withdraw after submission/publication of the research.

### **What we do with the information we have**

The data you provide is audio recorded and a transcription is made of that recording. This data will be analysed as part of the research process.

Although the raw data I collect from you will not usually be shared with anyone else, the data may be shared with my research supervisor, [insert supervisor's or tutor's name] at Waverley Abbey College, and, in rare circumstances, may be viewed by the programme's external examiner or other relevant assessors as part of the course requirements and relevant regulations under Middlesex University. In extreme circumstances, where there is imminent risk of harm or a legal obligation to disclose, data may be shared with relevant agencies and personnel.

In line with college policy, on completion of the course (or exit of the course), any raw research 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.

### **How we store your information**

Any electronic data (such as audio recording of the interview and transcripts created from the recording, notes and analysed files) will be securely stored in a password protected computer. Any paper documents and information will be kept in a locked cabinet at home.

We keep your contact details (name and address) until the dissertation has been examined and final mark confirmed, after that we will then dispose your information by confidential deleted/shredded.

In line with college policy, on completion of the course, 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.

### **Your data protection rights**

Under data protection law, you have rights including:

Your right of access - You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information.

Your right to rectification - You have the right to ask us to rectify information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete.

Your right to erasure - You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information in certain circumstances.

Participants can withdraw their participation in the research at any time and withdraw their consent, and their data, without giving a reason or explanation. Approximately one week after the research interview, transcription and analysis of the data will begin. Whilst every effort will be taken to remove all data if consent is withdrawn at any point after the research interview, it may be impracticable to withdraw all data after in-depth analysis of the data has commenced, and impractical to withdraw after submission/publication of the research.

Your right to restriction of processing - You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your information in certain circumstances.

Your right to object to processing - You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data in certain circumstances.

Your right to data portability - You have the right to ask that we transfer the information you gave us to another organisation, or to you, in certain circumstances.

You are not required to pay any charge for exercising your rights. If you make a request, we have one month to respond to you.

Please contact us at [insert your Waverley email address and phone number] if you wish to make a request.

### **How to complain**

You can raise a concern or complaint to the data protection officer at Waverley Abbey College via: E-mail: [simon.hawes@waverleyabbey.org](mailto:simon.hawes@waverleyabbey.org)

You can also complain to the ICO if you are unhappy with how we have used your data.

The ICO's address:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Helpline number: 0303 123 1113

**Who do I contact for further information or if I have questions?**

If you require and further information or have questions, please contact me on  
[Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:Yan.Allen@waverleyabbeycollege.ac.uk).

**Thank you for taking time to consider taking part.**

**Participant's name [insert]**

**Participant's signature [insert]**

**Date [insert]**

**Researcher's name Yan Allen**

**Researcher's signature [insert]**

**Date [insert]**