

BOARDING SCHOOL SURVIVORS & LONE ARROW PRESS present:

'The Un-Making of Them'

**A Diploma Training in Specialist Psychotherapy with Ex-Boarders
at post-graduate level**

2020 Curriculum

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1. Context for this training

Background

The last few years have seen an unprecedented increase in the interest in the psychological problems of boarding. Nick Duffell's psychohistory [Wounded Leaders](#) has generated several commissioned articles, including [two](#) in [The Guardian](#). Professor Joy Schaverien's book [Boarding School Syndrome](#) has been Routledge UK's best-selling title of 2015, and in April 2016 this leading academic publisher published [Trauma, Abandonment and Privilege: a guide to therapeutic work with boarding school survivors](#), by Nick Duffell and Thurstine Basset. Sue Gerhardt's (*Why Love Matters*) review of *Trauma, Abandonment and Privilege* is printed in the Appendix.

In May 2015, Confer hosted their first conference on these issues, '[The Establishment on the Couch](#)', featuring both Joy and Nick. An actor-read version of Nick's original 2000 book, [The Making of Them](#), is now available as an audio book for download from Audible.co.uk. On 9th September 2017 the first conference dedicated to the psychology of boarding, 'Boarding School – Surviving the Syndrome', was hosted by the University of Brighton. The conference received very good evaluations and was indeed over-subscribed, with all the places sold out over a month before it took place.

A parallel increase in enquiries to the [Boarding School Survivors' website](#) means that we have trained up five more teaching staff and are now running three 4-day public workshops a year. All these now have waiting lists and we still have more referrals for individual therapy from informed and experienced practitioners than we can fulfil.

As [Boarding School Syndrome](#) and the [Strategic Survival Personality](#) become increasingly recognised by GPs and others as problematic and specific psychological phenomena with a widespread prevalence in Britain, demand for information on how to work with these issues is growing very fast now. Organisations (for example, the Rock Clinic in Brighton) are now offering specialist psychotherapy for boarding school survivors.

The first Post-graduate Diploma Training in Specialist Psychotherapy with Ex-boarders was run in 2006 with Nick Duffell and Joy Schaverien as main trainers. To coincide with the publication of *Trauma, Abandonment and Privilege* we launched our second Diploma training in 2016, called '**The Un-Making of Them**', and a third Diploma course then ran in 2017-18.

This year, as response to request from enquiries and following a review of the curriculum, we are delighted to be able to offer **The Un-Making of Them** once more.

What is the need for this training?

In Britain, boarding school became the favourite, rarely questioned, almost required destiny for the children of the middle and upper classes, starting usually well before puberty. Under the prevailing 18th and 19th century attitudes to children, boarders were subjected to a process of being 'made' into the right stuff: rational, successful, aspirational and confident of their superior place in the world. Vulnerability, emotions, softness, sexuality, dependence had no place under this scheme and had to be disowned. These attitudes have proved surprisingly durable to the present day. They appear to have conditioned our nation's social structure and subverted our politics.

Until very recently the effects of boarding education on children have been largely ignored. Despite frequent references in English popular literature to the agonies experienced by children at boarding schools and to the repressed and secretive adults they can become, the problem went almost entirely unnoticed by the medical and psychological professions. There are several reasons for this. In Britain, boarding education carries high social status, and is therefore considered a privilege worthy of the considerable financial investment parents make. The interested parties, therefore, have been unlikely to question this social investment, while the children, laden with expectations, put on their 'brave faces'. Problems tend therefore to resurface only in later life.

Ex-boarders have been well trained to put away all vulnerability and empathy in favour of *functioning*, showing the world only their well-built façade, their Strategic Survival Personality. In consequence, the severe difficulties they have in intimate relationships or with workaholism, for example – which ought to be expected following attachment-deficient institutionalisation – can get discounted or be difficult to pin-point, let alone heal. Besides, most ex-boarders suffer from a malady that they themselves have not identified with.

While some commentators propose that only 'some children are damaged by boarding', our experience over 29 years at Boarding School Survivors suggests that *all* children have to *survive* the rupture of attachments and institutionalisation, and that this cannot be achieved without a cost.

The problems for ex-boarders are only beginning to be properly recognised, and many therapists still overlook boarding issues in their caseload. Moreover, the combination of learned functioning and privileged abandonment makes boarding school survivors extremely challenging clients to work with. Working therapeutically with boarding school survivors is particularly challenging for many reasons, but chiefly because it involves helping the clients to live without the learned defences of a lifetime, to *take down* the Strategic Survival Personality that has been the best friend and protector. This is what we mean by the *un-making of them*.

Such delicate work requires specialised knowledge and skills: hence this training.

2. Programme description

Aims

We have tried to offer a programme that will cater to the diverse experience and resources that participants bring in order to equip them with a foundation of skills that we think are needed to work therapeutically with this specific client group. Our feedback has been that the training has additionally built competence in all-round clinical work.

We also know that each participant has different reasons for participating and brings differing experiences. In particular we have designed the training so that both those who were boarders themselves as children and those who were not can be included. Ex-boarders are encouraged to prioritise working on their personal material in their own therapy and our workshop programme so that they can maintain a professional focus during the training.

Content

The *Un-Making of Them* training offers a powerful and clear methodology that develops a way of thinking about and working with ex-boarders founded in psychodynamic, systemic, analytic, gestalt, and transpersonal methods, combining new insights from Attachment Therapy, Traumatology and Neuroscience with the cutting edge teachings of Gender Psychology. Each module on the training is staffed by two experienced trainers.

The diploma programme was developed in line with current university guidance in relation to ensuring that both the learning outcomes and the teaching input are at post-graduate level

Options

Additionally, our programme is designed to function at a variety of different levels: from developing existing professional skills and building on experience through to integrated practice and understanding to diploma graduation standard.

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Applicants may:

1. **Attend all training modules without proceeding to graduation.** They will receive a Certificate of Attendance and of Continuous Professional Development.
2. **Attend and complete all training modules, fulfilling requirements for specialist BSS supervision before applying to graduate.** Successful candidates will receive a *Diploma in Specialist Psychotherapy with Ex-Boarders* equivalent to post-graduate level and become eligible to join our referral network. Graduation usually takes place after the training has finished and is subject to the Graduation Criteria (see Section 6 below).

Applicants are not required to specify in advance whether they are committing to the graduation option. Participants may move towards graduation at their own pace. Equally, those selecting Option 1 may choose at a later date to move towards graduation, when they feel ready.

Format

The *Un-Making of Them* Diploma Training involves four 2-day modules over weekends – Saturday 10am – 6pm, Sunday 10am – 5.30pm. The modules combine the teaching of context and theory with clinical applications and practice and are delivered by members of our staff team (see below), usually working in pairs.

Hand-outs, audio file materials, and a comprehensive reading list will be made available. The learning outcomes of the training and the topics of the modules are listed below.

To support learning and to provide continuity between modules, we have scheduled *optional* additional 3-hour meetings for tutorial and training supervision in small groups. These meetings will normally be on the pre-weekend Fridays. If there is sufficient demand we may be able to schedule extra groups.

Participants can choose one of our specialised supervisors as an option to support their learning. For those wishing to proceed to graduation, this is a requirement.

Participants should be prepared to source their own clients; sometimes Boarding School Survivors may be able to offer referrals but this is not guaranteed.

At the completion of the training modules, all participants will be given a training feedback form, which offers a chance to make written feedback on the content and delivery of the course as well as their own participatory role.

Reading from the list provided is recommended between modules, and one short book review is to be written and circulated amongst peers and trainers. The book review and Feedback form on completion of the course are the only written requirements for those not proceeding towards graduation.

3. Learning Outcomes

On successfully completing the training, participants will be sufficiently able to:

- Critically appraise and apply the underpinning psychological theories employed in psychotherapeutic work with clients who have endured the trauma and broken attachments of the boarding school experience.
- Evaluate and put into practice a way of working that involves enabling clients to make the journey from *Recognition* through *Acceptance* and to *Change*, whilst being fully aware of considerable resistance to change.
- Demonstrate a thorough comprehension of the mechanisms of the *Strategic Survival Personality* - its impact on a client's life, in particular their intimate and personal relationships.
- Understand and track the role of dissociation in this process and develop skills for feeding back their findings to the client.
- Demonstrate a thorough comprehension of the long-term effects of living in institutions run on patriarchal lines and potentially open to abuse and how this impacts on issues such as ethnic identity, sexuality, gender and relationships.
- Critically appraise their own work with ex-boarders in a reflective way, in particular develop the ability to differentiate and self-regulate in relation to own personal material being activated in the professional setting.
- Develop confidence and competence in the necessary skills of working with powerful systems and challenging field dynamics, including the therapist's 'use of self' by investigating counter-transference phenomena.
- Construct realistic action plans for future work, learning and supervision.

4. Practical details of the training

The Staff Team

Trainers: Thurstine Basset, Nick Duffell (Main Trainer) and Nicola Miller.

Supervisors: Helena Løvendal-Duffell, Pippa Foster, Darrel Hunneybell, John Andrew Miller, Nicola Miller, Joy Schaverien (Senior Supervisor).

Academic Consultant: Thurstine Basset.

Training Coordinator: Lyn Jones

Biographic details of staff are available on our website

www.boardingschoolsurvivors.co.uk

Contact details of supervisors will be available on acceptance to the training.

Dates 2020

Modules

- Module 1. 8-9 February 2020
- Module 2. 25-26 April 2020
- Module 3. 20-21 June 2020
- Module 4. 19-20 September 2020

Optional Tutorial meetings (by arrangement) Times: 2- 5pm.

- T1. 24 April
- T2. 19 June
- T3. 15 October
- T4. 13 November
- T5. 11 December
- T6. 15 January 2021

Venue

The training weekends will be held at The Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre, Children's Corner, Croftdown Road, London NW5 1HB.

<http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/HLCCC-childrens-corner/the-space>

HLCCC is situated in the Dartmouth Park area of North London, next to Highgate Cemetery and a short walk from great lunch spots in Swains Lane and Hampstead Heath. There is good parking and disability access and the C11 buses stops outside. The nearest tube is Archway, nearest Overground is Gospel Oak, but Archway, Kentish Town, Belsize Park and Highgate tube

stations have bus links.

The small groups will be held at 6 Chester Court, Lissenden Gardens, London NW51LY, off Highgate Road, adjacent Hampstead Heath and Gospel Oak Overground, with good public transport links and disability access, and some parking.

Costs

Training Fees

Full training fees, including administration, training materials, handouts and audio file materials, tea, coffee and refreshments at break times (but not lunches) are from £1,185.00. There are two payment options:

1. *Full payment in advance*: £200 deposit on application, plus discount for advance payment on acceptance of £985 = £1,185.00 in total.
2. *Payment by instalments*: £200 deposit on application, plus 6 standing order stage-payments of £185 = £1,110.00 = £1,310.00 in total.

Stage payments should begin the month prior to the training start date and continue each month on the same date.

Deposits cover our administration costs and are fully returnable if a withdrawal is 2 months prior to training start date; otherwise they are non-returnable.

Additional optional costs

Optional tutorial groups

The optional tutorial/ training supervision small group 3-hour sessions held in London with Nick may be booked at the time and cost £80.

Individual Supervision

Individual supervision is optional and can be arranged with the supervisor of choice from our list at their agreed fee. For those wishing to proceed to graduation, this is a requirement; there may also be a fee for preparing the supervisor's report.

Graduation

For those wishing to apply for graduation, there is a graduation fee of £200. This covers evaluation of the supervisor's report, dialogue with the supervisor, an assessment meeting if required, as well as the graduation celebration.

5. Training Schedule and Components

Module 1

Staffing: Thurstine Basset & Nick Duffell, with Nicola Miller on Sunday.

Topics:

Seminar 1

Boarding School Survival: broken attachments, normalised trauma, or unrecognised syndrome? The British Attitude to Children. The Strategic Survival Personality Part 1. Survival types. *The Therapeutic Endeavour*.

Seminar 2

Introducing boarding as trauma. Self-care in the absence of mothers and fathers.

Seminar 3

Signs & Symptoms and Relationships. Detective work with ex-boarders. Why are BSS clients so hard to work with? The slippery client. The *Trauma, Abandonment and Privilege Toolkit*.

Seminar 4

Survival: the Strategic Survival Personality Part 2. Survival. The RAC Framework for therapy (Recognition/Acceptance/Change). The 5 stages of healing; the 3 elements of survival; the 3 levels of Identity.

Module 2

Staffing: Nicola Miller & Nick Duffell

Topics:

Seminar 5

Adapting: The Strategic Survival Personality Part 3 — the *unmade* child Survival ID Inner parent and inner child in boarding. Transgenerational boarding patterns.

Seminar 6

Managing Separation and Loss. Leaving home, abandonment and privilege, the *seen and not heard* child.

Seminar 7

Working effectively with the effects of bullying and sexual abuse.

Seminar 8

Helping ex-boarders with *Re-membering*. Time-tabling. Unmasking Survival Patterns. Self-Betrayal.

Module 3

Staffing: Nicola Miller & Nick Duffell

Topics:

Seminar 9

Sex, Gender and Relationships. Puberty and institutional life.
Re-programming the mirroring parents

Seminar 10

Girls boarding; becoming a woman at boarding school. Shame.

Seminar 11

A 'training for intimacy'? The Strategic Survival Personality in relationship: *I love you, go away.*

Seminar 12

The Healing Process. The Will *Not* to Change.

Module 4

Staffing: Nicola Miller & Nick Duffell with Thurstine Basset on Sunday.

Topics:

Seminar 13

Survival context. New approaches to Trauma; Complex and Developmental Trauma, ex-boarders acting out and in *immobilisation* states.

Seminar 14

Unmasking Survival Patterns. Self-Betrayal. The Strategic Survival Personality Part 3. Behaviour Wants and Needs, variety of survival personae. How survival Patterns serve and limit. Survival payoff.

Seminar 15

A Double Life. Working with Dissociation Part 1. Horizontal and Vertical splitting. Fabian Rourke's Target Model. Splitting as self-betrayal. Dump Truck Ethics. Working with Dissociation Part 2.

Seminar 16

Consolidation. Stories about change. Evaluation of training days in relation to learning outcomes. Next steps.

6. Graduation

For those who would like to proceed to graduation, please note that merely attending and completing all training components is not in itself a guarantee of qualification at the end of training. Qualification is subject to assessment by the Training Team, according to individual participants' needs and progress and the Graduation Criteria, which are set out below.

Time and attention is needed to deepen the material, as the challenging work with ex-boarders progresses, so participants are advised to take their time according to their own needs and in dialogue with their supervisor before applying. Those who have to miss parts of the programme may be able to make up some time in the tutorial groups. Some may wish to have a post-training clinical year under supervision before applying, and this is often a useful option.

In order to apply for the Diploma, participants must have attended a minimum of 90% of the group-work/training day hours (43 hours) and fulfilled all specified writing and supervision requirements, and all fees must be paid. Participants must have begun clinical work with at least one boarding school survivor under supervision with one of our recommended supervisors

Graduation procedure

- When the participant feels ready, having completed a minimum of six supervisions on their work with ex-boarder clients, they should inform their supervisor that they are considering applying for graduation.
- The supervisor will respond and discuss this with the supervisee. It is possible at this point that more supervision will be recommended, in which case the reasons for this will be discussed.
- When both supervisee and supervisor are sufficiently confident that the training outcomes have been understood and are beginning to be integrated into practice, the participant will prepare a short Self-appraisal Report (1500 – 3000 words) to demonstrate this with the help of the supervisor. The Self-appraisal Report could take the form of a case study (but doesn't have to be), and needs to evidence learning in relation to each of the training outcomes.
- The supervisor will then also prepare a brief report, in dialogue with the supervisee.
- The participant should next inform the Training Team of their intention to proceed towards graduation, by email or letter and pay the graduation fee (see *Additional Optional Costs*, Section 4). Both Self-appraisal Report and Supervisor's Report will be submitted together to the Training Team.

- The Training Team will acknowledge the application by email and will discuss it. They will then notify the training group that this participant has applied and checking that their peers feel able to support their application. The successful participant will then receive a confirmation email.
- A graduation ceremony will be held for successful graduates to receive their diplomas. This will be at a later date, to be mutually agreed, and to which friends and relatives may be invited. Graduates wishing to receive their diploma in the post prior to this, may request it.
- Where a participant, who applies to graduate, is adjudged to have not met the criteria, they will receive written feedback as to why this is the case. In addition, they will be given the option of resubmitting for graduation later, for example, in 6-9 months time. Where there is uncertainty, an assessment meeting with a representative of the Training Team may be necessary. There will be no further charge for such a meeting.

Graduation criteria

Participants will be awarded the diploma when:

- The required amount of attendance has been met.
- All fees have been paid.
- Any written requirements have been fulfilled.
- The specified Learning Outcomes have been sufficiently integrated (see Section 3).
- The Self-appraisal Report demonstrating learning in relation to the Learning Outcomes has been completed and submitted.
- The required client hours under supervision have been completed.
- Their supervisor reports that their clinical work shows a sufficient understanding of theory and implementation of practice and is not over-influenced by personal material.
- Crucially: there is a sufficient congruence between the applicant's self-assessment and that of their peers and the staff team.

NB. If any of the above criteria have not been met, the Training Team reserves the right to refuse qualification or to suggest additional supportive and corrective measures towards meeting them.

Post-graduation

The number of ex-boarder therapists is steadily growing even though we still cannot meet the demand for informed therapists in all areas. Several of our graduates have offered information days at various localities to spread the

word in the clinical community. Others have joined the group-work team of Boarding School Survivors

Some therapists continue to meet at on-going supervision groups, either peer led or facilitated. Further support, supervision, training and networking opportunities are provided through the networks of Boarding School Survivors, Boarding Recovery and Boarding Concern, which has been offering an annual conference and regular newsletter.

Boarding Recovery is a website run independently of BSS to which graduates of UMOT are eligible to apply. It is a resource for people seeking therapists with specialist experience and training in working with boarding school survivors. UMOT graduation is not a requirement for applying but evidence of an appropriate level of training and supervision will be asked for.

7. Entry Requirements

This training is designed at a post-graduate level intended for qualified counsellors, therapists and other professionals with relevant experience. Application from those in the process of completing a first qualification may be considered where there are particular circumstances.

You do not need to have had experience of boarding school personally or in your own family to apply. Ex-boarders who wish to apply are strongly advised to attend one of our Boarding School Survivors workshops and to prioritise their personal experiences in their own therapy, so that personal material does not interfere with their professional learning capacity.

Additional criteria for acceptance include:

- Previous relevant training and qualifications
- Present professional experience
- Personal motivation

Those intending to complete the full training and practise must have their own public liability insurance and must agree to abide by the code of ethics of their training or accrediting body.

If you wish to apply please fill in the application form at the end of this document and send it us at info@boardingschoolsurvivors.co.uk together with your deposit and scanned copies of your relevant qualification and insurance certificates. Your deposits can be paid by BACS by cheque, details on the application form below. Applications for the full training will only be considered when we have received all the relevant documents.

Places are limited so don't delay. If you have any questions before applying please feel free to email them to us at info@boardingschoolsurvivors.co.uk

8. Terms and Conditions

While acknowledging that you are a professional, possibly with an established practice, we wish to make you aware of your commitments on entering into the training. As the training team has a commitment to train you, we ask that you be clear about your side of this contract so that the undertaking is mutual.

Your undertaking is to:

- Participate fully (with at least 90% attendance) in the training components, if possible.
- Pay all fees due upon acceptance onto the training, or by instalments, as agreed. Should you choose to withdraw from the training before the end, payment of fees must be made in full, even if due to changing circumstances.
- Hand in written work at the agreed time.
- Attend individual supervision with a member of the supervisors' team, if intending to qualify for graduation.
- In order to qualify for graduation participants must agree to be assessed by staff members and must be prepared to receive constructive feedback from their peers.
- Not claim to be qualified by us until after graduation.

Additionally

- The organisers reserve the right to change staffing, dates and venues, with due notice.
- Participants are at all times responsible for their actions within the training group.
- Participation is entered into on a voluntary basis.
- Participants and graduates are required to be properly insured against third party and negligence claims and to observe the membership criteria and codes of ethics of their own accrediting bodies.
- Trainers and organisers do not accept responsibility for any physical, mental or emotional harm incurred as a result of participation.
- Signing the application form means that you agree to these terms and conditions and that the application form becomes a contract between organisers and learner.

9. Appendix

Sue Gerhardt's Review of *Trauma, Abandonment And Privilege: A Therapeutic Guide To Working With Boarding School Survivors*, by Nick Duffell and Thurstine Bassett, Routledge, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-138-78870-1

Nick Duffell has done pioneering work in establishing that behind the façade of privilege, private boarding education can be emotionally traumatic for many children. In this excellent new book, he and his co-author, Thurstine Bassett, take their mission to the field of psychotherapy and associated professions. They want more clinicians to be aware of this potential trauma and to better understand how to work with adult clients who attended boarding school. The book draws on different psychotherapy traditions. Readable, short chapters are interspersed with useful case examples, as well as by questions to aid the therapist in reflecting on the material. There are also potential exercises for the clients themselves.

The focus of the book is an exploration of what the authors call the 'boarding school syndrome'. At its core, this is the process by which children learn to minimise or even dissociate from their emotions. Although many boarders may already come from avoidantly attached families and nanny or au pair care, the practice of boarding itself deliberately ruptures previous attachments in order to re-socialise the child in its own peculiar culture. It promotes personalities which appear self-reliant, competent, "little soldiers" who can cope with anything.

The fall-out from this process is that the emotionally unsupported and abandoned child develops chronic anxiety and mistrust: a fear of being wrong or of getting caught, along with the need to armour the self, by using the rational intellect or by projecting emotions onto others to defend against vulnerability. The authors advocate therapy which provides a safe, accepting and mothering environment in which to take off the armour and mature, learning to integrate the defensively cut off islands of self and to learn to "live" not just survive.

As an ex-boarder myself, I found many of the case examples and quotes from ex-boarders painfully resonant and moving at times. However, my own inner 'Rebel' (one of three 'strategic survival personality' types) threw up a few questions including whether the book's overarching narrative would apply to securely attached children and whether there is a more complex story for those with disorganised early attachments. Avenues for future research, perhaps.