

AUSTIN VOCAL PSYCHOTHERAPY INTERNATIONAL DISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAMME

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2024-26

This is a two-year post-masters training course taught by **Dr. Diane Austin**, available to qualified music therapists or other therapists with a comparable skill set, which will result in a certificate in Vocal Psychotherapy from the Music Psychotherapy Center in New York City, USA. The certification includes the authorization to use the credentials AVPT (Austin Vocal Psychotherapist).

Graduates of the program will be placed on our international referral list for clients seeking this model of psychotherapy.

Course Description

Vocal Psychotherapy is the use of the breath, natural sounds, vocal improvisation, songs and dialogue within a client and therapist relationship to facilitate intra-psychic and interpersonal change and growth. It combines the ideas and theories of depth psychology with the practice of vocal music therapy. This model includes Vocal Holding Techniques©, Free Associative Singing© and other techniques for accessing conscious and unconscious feelings, memories and associations.

The course will provide students with a broad theoretical and experiential knowledge of the therapeutic benefits of vocal improvisation in music therapy. The strong Jungian-based theoretical foundation will be taught through lectures and discussion and students will learn to apply theory to practice through experiential workshops.

The core learning during the four experiential weeks provides rich opportunities to observe, participate in and lead voice-centred therapeutic experiences and interventions. The group therapy model encourages students to fully immerse themselves in the group experience and strong, lasting relationships often develop with fellow participants. It is important that students also access their own individual therapy separate to the course to process the personal material that arises.

Programme Content

Through a combination of workshops, discussion, seminars and supervision the course will cover:

- The theories of depth psychology including psychoanalysis and Jungian psychology.
- Trauma theory and resourcing.
- Vocal interventions and how they can be adapted with different populations.
- Vocal holding techniques©, free associative singing© and other techniques
- Awareness of the benefits of deep breathing practice in singing and as a therapeutic tool.
- How natural sounds and movements enable a connection between body, mind and spirit.
- A repertoire of improvisational sound and movement games, exercises and songs.
- The therapeutic value of toning and chanting.
- Somatic experiencing.
- Therapeutic song writing.
- Use of verbal interpretation

Programme structure

The programme is taught through a combination of in person and online learning over 2 years.

	Year 1 (hours)	Year 2 (hours)	Total hours
Experiential learning	70 (10 days)	70 (10 days)	140
Online seminars / check-ins	10 (5 x 2hrs)	8 (4 x 2hrs)	18
Group supervision	15 (6 x 2.5hrs)	15 (6 x 2.5hrs)	30
1:1 supervision	1	1	2
			190

Course trainer

Founder and lead trainer: Dr Diane Austin

Co-trainers: Tina Warnock, Nele Fiers

Experiential learning

- The experiential learning takes place over four separate weeks, in Brighton, England (August 2024, February 2025, August 2025, March/April 2026).
- Each week includes 5 full days of experiential workshops and a day off in the middle for processing and rest.

(Exact location and dates will be confirmed later)

Seminars and supervision (on Saturdays via Zoom)

- Seminars, check-ins and group supervisions take place online via Zoom generally between 11am and 1/1.30pm US Eastern time.
- Students are asked to complete two pieces of case work focusing on the key techniques vocal holding and free associative singing, supported through group and 1:1 supervision.

In the fourth quarter each student will need to submit a paper about one aspect of their training.

Tuition Fees:

The fees are £3000 per year, total fee £6000

Once a place has been offered, a payment of £1500 will be required to secure your place and a further £1500 before the course begins. A range of payment options for the balance are available.

Further costs will apply for accommodation and food which will be arranged independently (estimated cost between £500 and £1000 per person per week depending on personal preference).

In addition, students must commit to attending to their own personal therapy during the training.

How do I apply?

Applications should include a letter giving your reasons for wanting to take the course, your voice work history, and curriculum vitae. Applicants need to have a master's qualification in Music Therapy or equivalent.

Please send applications via email with attachments to the Programme Director:

Tina Warnock: vocalpsychotherapy@belltree.org.uk

If you would like to discuss your application please email Tina, at the address above, or call +44 (0)1273 776454.

Suitable applicants will be interviewed via Skype by Diane Austin and places will only be secured after the deposit has been paid.

For further information about Diane Austin and her work, please visit www.dianeaustrin.com

For further information about Brighton, visit: <https://www.visitbrighton.com/>

Feedback from some trainees on the 2018-20 course:

'I left the first residency feeling incredibly touched and assured of the transformation that has begun in me as a result of Diane's teaching and attention, as well as the group's engagement in our shared experience of the course. I went in knowing the content and teaching would be impactful, but was amazed by the deep impact that our cohort of learners also had on one another's process. I am eager to continue exploring my voice and the psychotherapy process with Diane and my cohort.'

– Cathleen Flynn, USA

'For me, the combination of the experiential weeks and the online seminars is very helpful; it allows time to digest the information, to think and rethink, to try things out. Because we can meet online every month, we don't lose the connection with the group members and can build on the strong connections which developed in the first experiential week...and we can learn from our own group processes which after all offer loads of live material to work with and to process.'

– Nele Fiers, Belgium

'Vocal psychotherapy in UK has been a great experience for me so far. Our group consists of music therapists from all over the world, which is amazing! The setting is very beautiful in the English countryside and the place where we are staying is cosy and relaxing. Tina (Programme Director) was very welcoming and organized. We worked very hard and in-depth in the first week as a group and had the chance to learn many ways to use our voice as a powerful tool to express ourselves and work in the clinical setting.

I already feel much more confident using my voice as a music therapist and I have plenty of new tools which will help me work more deeply with my clients. This course is not just helping me as a therapist but on a more personal level as well; going through the experiential exercises and using my voice at this level is enabling me to understand more about myself, my past, my fears and where I am right now. I highly recommend this course to any music therapist who wants to use the voice to work at a deeper psychoanalytical level with their clients.'

- Elena Pasoudi, Greece

And from the US-based course:

'I am a Licensed Creative arts Therapist (LCAT) working on an acute behavioral health hospital unit and maintaining a private psychotherapy practice treating clients in recovery from substance abuse and childhood trauma, including sexual abuse. In her program Dr. Austin provides a strong, Jungian based theoretical foundation as well as the opportunity to observe and practice both verbal processing and vocal improvisation techniques. Her Vocal Holding program is comprehensive and thorough offering unique and effective techniques to build trust, promote relaxation and focus, and bring important intrapsychic material to conscious awareness. Throughout the program, Dr. Austin provides ongoing group and individual support. Dr. Austin also provides trainees with an extensive body of research related to her model and her techniques, grounding them in the evidence-based practice required in today's healthcare environment. Dr. Austin's program was without question the most important part of my preparation for this work and was instrumental in my development as a therapist. Thanks to Dr. Austin I approach clients confident, grounded and prepared. I cannot imagine who I would be in my work or how I would practice my work without this preparation. I consider this background and training to have made me as well or better prepared to work in psychiatry than my colleagues in social work or nursing. I give this program my highest recommendation!'

Laurie Crosse, LCAT, MA, MT-BC, VPT

July 2018
Experiential
Week

