

## Testimonial for learning Play of Life by Distance Education

I first met “Play of Life” during counselling training at Morling College when Carlos was invited to present his method as a possible technique to use in counselling. I then met it again when a counsellor used it to help me “unlock” a personal situation where I was stuck. Later, as a counsellor myself, my supervisor helped me find a way forward for a difficult client by using POL. In both cases, I was “blown away” by the simplicity and effectiveness of the method in finding the first step to take in order to move forward.

Studying Modules I & II by Distance Ed proved to be an effective way of learning. I was able to take my own time through the theory until I “owned” it for myself. I was also able to “play” with the figures and additional props and explore how they could be used to symbolise a variety of elements in a range of scenarios. It was good to know that help was readily available at the end of a phone or email.

Of particular value was the opportunity to apply each of the exercises to my own life first and realise their value in helping me either to find clarity or to affirm decisions I had made about the dynamics of a particular situation. Importantly, I was able to try out an exercise on friends and see its value for them before I moved on to the next technique.

It was rather akin to savouring each course of a fine meal over a good length of time.

One of the aspects of the course that I responded to strongly was the focus on moving forward from one’s positive memories rather than the often practised focus on unlocking the past by repeatedly revisiting it. This does not mean that the past is ignored – it informs rather than controls the POL method. The “Pillars of Life” technique provided perhaps the best example of this. At a time of life when redundancy from a life-long career is a reality, to be able to create simple 3D depictions of important positive and affirming times, then to have the freedom of time to reflect and savour what I had created and what it meant was a significant experience.

Having “owned” and “savoured” Modules I & II, the progression to workshopping Modules 3 & 4 in a small group context flowed smoothly in terms of content and the presentation of the material. It was good to be able to practise the new techniques with peers and seek on-the-spot clarifications, coaching and encouragement. But, like the first “meal”, there is still the need to own and savour – through consolidation, practice, feedback and reflection. I look forward to my first peer group interaction and professional supervision session and the learning that they promise.

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