

Venture Trust: Outdoor Therapy Training



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Introduction

Venture Trust's clinical Outdoor Therapy Service has developed various trainings to introduce therapeutic practitioners to an ethical, safe and creative outdoor therapy practice.

The Outdoor Therapy Training is built on Venture Trust's 40-years of experience of working with people in outdoor environments. It has been developed by a team of multi-modality qualified therapists with extensive experience of facilitating outdoor therapy and wilderness therapy. Designed with counsellors, psychotherapists and allied mental health professionals in mind, it covers aspects such as, boundaries, the setting, current good practice, managing risk, working with metaphor and creative exercises in a nature-based practice.

Trainings have been designed with accessibility in mind. Locations and training exercises are chosen with the intention of reducing barriers for people to participate. Venture Trust welcomes a group with mixed professional and personal experience.

Venture Trust's Outdoor Therapy Training Options

Venture Trust offers several distinct training programmes for people interested in developing their therapeutic skills in the outdoors:

2 Day Training: An Introduction

An introduction to working therapeutically outdoors.

4 Day Training: A Deeper Insight

A comprehensive introduction to working therapeutically outdoors and in more remote settings.

Bespoke Training and Consultation for Organisations

Consultation and bespoke design of outdoor therapy services and training for organisations.

2 Day Training:

An introduction to working therapeutically outdoors

What is the 2 Day Training?

This two-day course will offer the possibility to learn about and consider what it means to work safely therapeutically outdoors. Space will be given to the different ways in which one may construct and maintain a frame, as well as current good practice principles.

We will also take time to consider the therapist's personal relationship with nature, as well as that of the client and how it may inform the work. Through pair-work and triad practice exercises participants will be able to practice their skills and consider some of the challenges and benefits of working in this way.

What can I hope to gain from the 2 Day Training?

Trainees can hope to gain an understanding of what it means to work safely outdoors, and the various elements that need to be taken into consideration.

Additionally, trainees can hope to learn about their own relationship to nature and how this can inform their practice, or that of their client. Through triad-work, participants will also learn some of the more practical and theoretical aspects of the work.

Through experiential practice exercises, there will not only be possibility for self-reflection but also the chance to develop tangible tools and resources.

2 Day Learning Outcomes

Building and holding a frame outdoors	Experiential reflective practice exercise outdoors
Boundaries outdoors	Working with metaphor
Risk	Theory
Introduction to current good practice	Tools and resources for outdoor therapeutic work
Space to comprehend one's own relationship to nature	Group and individual reflection
Triad work	

Themes we aim to cover:

Containment outdoors	The theoretical background of outdoor therapy
Secure base	Practical elements of outdoor therapy work
Boundaries	Managing risk
Challenges to the frame	Current good practice
Working with the natural environment and metaphor	

How is the course delivered?

- Through didactic and theoretical sessions led by the course facilitators
- Through experiential and reflective exercises done individually, in small groups or the group-as-a-whole.
- Through triad practice in the natural environment
- Through interactive and reflective group discussion

What group size is the 2 Day Training?

The group will have a maximum of 12 participants.

Who is the 2 Day Training for?

The 2 Day Training is designed for therapists or other allied mental health professionals with experience of working with vulnerable client groups. This may include psychotherapists, counsellors, psychologists, art therapists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, social workers etc.*

*For those people that are not trained or are working in a therapeutic capacity, we would tend to suggest that they have 3 years' experience working with vulnerable client groups or clients with additional needs.

Are there any pre-requisites for the 2 Day Training?

There are no pre-requisites for the course, other than being a therapist or mental health professional.

We may suggest having a brief exchange (usually over the telephone or zoom) with the applicants, to mutually consider that the course is well suited to them.

What the 2 Day Training is not

This training does not give the participants an introduction to wilderness journeying or multi-week residential work.

Cost:

For cost, please consult our website: www.venturetrust.org.uk/outdoorthrapytraining/

Dates and locations:

For dates and locations, please consult our website: www.venturetrust.org.uk/outdoorthrapytraining/

Cancellation Policy:

You will receive a full refund if you cancel one month before the course start date. Please note, cancellations after this will receive a 50% refund, and cancellations after 2 weeks before the course date will not be refunded. We will do our best to reallocate you to another course subject to availability.

The training will take place with a minimum of 6 participants and a maximum of 12 participants. If the training does not reach its minimum capacity and is cancelled by Venture Trust, we will offer you a place on another programme or provide a full refund.

Subsidised place:

We would like our training to be accessible and inclusive. If you feel that the cost is going to be a barrier to you attending, please get in touch to discuss the possibility of a subsidised or free place. Venture Trust will cover the cost of one or two subsidised or free spaces per training.

A recommended kit list can be supplied upon request.

4 Day Training: A Deeper Insight

A comprehensive introduction to working therapeutically outdoors and in more remote settings

What is the 4 Day Training?

This four-day training will offer the possibility to learn what it means to work safely, ethically and creatively in outdoor and wilderness environments.

We will live in the natural environment -camping or in accommodation- and as such participants will have an immersive training experience. We will consider in depth the way in which nature, journeying and community can play an active role in the therapeutic work.

We will consider how to hold a frame or setting in natural and wilderness environments, and the challenges we might face. There will be an introduction to current good practice principles and the theoretical underpinnings

Through a variety of pair-work and triad practice exercises participants will be able to practice and hone their skills whilst moving through different landscapes.

Through a range of experiential activities participants will interact with the natural environment and learn tools and resources for working in groups and with individuals.

What can I hope to gain from the 4 Day Training?

Trainees will have a lived experience of outdoor and wilderness therapy, with the space to learn and reflect accompanied by experienced professionals “in the field”. They will journey in community together, which will allow them to have a real insight into the client’s experience in outdoor and wilderness therapy.

Through extensive triad-work, participants will be able to practice and become familiar with the assessment process and the setting of a frame in the outdoors.

Through reflective experiential practice exercises using art and natural materials, therapists will be able to develop tools and resources. Participants will have the opportunity to consider how they might apply outdoor therapy within the context of their workplaces.

Accompanying this, they will learn current good practice principles and the underpinning theory to outdoor and wilderness work.

4 Day Learning Outcomes:

Building and holding a frame outdoors	Experiential reflective exercise outdoors
Boundaries outdoors	Tools and resources for outdoor therapeutic work
Risk	Practical skills for residential outdoor/wilderness therapy work
Introduction to current good practice	Working with art and metaphor
Assessment	Reflection on embodied experience and mindfulness practices
Theoretical underpinnings	Group and individual reflection and discussion
Triad work	Application to workplace

Themes we aim to cover:

Containment outdoors	Theoretical background of outdoor and wilderness therapy
Boundaries and challenges to the frame	Journeying
Managing risk outdoors	Living in community
Working with the natural environment and metaphor	Practical elements of outdoor therapy work
Creative exercises with natural materials	Current good practice

How is the 4 Day Training delivered?

- Through didactic and theoretical sessions led by the course facilitators
- Through experiential and reflective exercises done individually, in small groups or the group-as-a-whole
- Through triad practice in the natural environment
- Through lived experience of journeying in community
- Through interactive and reflective group discussion

What group size is the 4 Day Training?

The group will have a maximum of 12 participants.

Who is the 4 Day Training for?

The 4 Day Training is designed for therapists or other allied mental health professionals with experience of working with vulnerable client groups. This may include psychotherapists, counsellors, psychologists, art therapists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, social workers etc.*

*For those people that are not trained or are working in a therapeutic capacity, we would tend to suggest that they have 3 years' experience working with vulnerable client groups or clients with additional needs.

Are there any pre-requisites for the 4 Day Training?

This training is open to qualified psychotherapists and counsellors, as well as allied mental health professionals. We will also accept applications from trainees in these fields.

We may suggest having a brief exchange (usually over the telephone or zoom) with applicants, to mutually consider that the course is well suited to them.

What the 4 Day Training is not

The 4 day training is not a training in outdoor instruction and, as such, does not cover skills such as navigation or hill walking etc. This training will not qualify people to set up wilderness therapy practices without further supervision, and potentially further support or training. We strongly recommend that any person wishing to take their practice into outdoor environments should receive appropriate supervision and a commitment to continued professional development in the field.

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Bespoke Training and Consultation for Organisations:

Consultation, bespoke design of outdoor therapy services and outdoor therapy training for organisations

We offer consultation and bespoke training offers to organisations looking to establish outdoor therapy services or train their staff in outdoor therapy.

The consultation process will allow an organisation to understand how they might establish an ethical and safe outdoor therapy service. This will be considered in the context of the organisation, the client-group, the greenspace and the community.

Areas considered in consultation:

Risk and safety	Assessment process
Ethical practice	Supervision
Organisational policy	Greenspace considerations
Policy specific to Outdoor Therapy	Staff-team and organisational set-up
Insurance	Service design
Client group	Training in outdoor therapy skills

Consultation process

The consultation process will allow an organisation to develop an outdoor therapy service within its existing frame.

The process would take the following form:

- Initial consultation period
- Period of training, implementation and reflective practice
- Review of implementation and scope for adjustments

Bespoke Training for organisations

We facilitate bespoke training offers for organisations wishing to train staff teams in an ethical outdoor therapy practice. These trainings may include some of the content of our 2 and 4 day trainings (please see above). However, they would be adapted to the client group, greenspaces and specific organisational context of that staff team.

Themes commonly covered in Bespoke Training:

Containment outdoors	Organisational context
Boundaries and challenges to the frame	Practical set-up
Managing risk	Working with the natural environment and metaphor
Assessment	Creative exercises with natural materials
Appropriate supervision	Theoretical background
Greenspaces	Current good practice

Further information

We invite organisations that are considering developing an outdoor therapy service to contact us to explore together how this might be possible.

Please contact us at info@venturetrust.org.uk

About the Training Organisation

Venture Trust has an extensive history of offering outdoor therapy, personal development and psychotherapeutic programmes in natural and wilderness locations in Scotland. Since the 1980s, the organisation has been working with complex clients in outdoor environments, often working with issues such as the effects of trauma, isolation, involvement in the criminal justice system and recovery from problem substance use.

Drawing on the collective knowledge and experience of the organisation, Venture Trust's Outdoor Therapy Service has developed a training programme and consultancy offer to help accompany other professionals and organisations that are interested in starting an ethical and safe outdoor therapy practice or service.

The training has been developed by Venture Trust's Outdoor Therapy Service multi-modality team, in conjunction with the therapists that worked on Venture Mor's Psychodynamic Wilderness Therapy Programmes and Venture Trust's Personal Development Programmes. The trajectory of these different services are outlined below:

- Venture Trust Personal Development Programmes in wilderness environments, 1982-present.
- Venture Mor Psychodynamic Wilderness Therapy Programmes, 2016-2021.
- Venture Trust's Outdoor Therapy Service, 2020-present.

Please find further information about Venture Trust here: www.venturetrust.org.uk/

Please find further information about the Outdoor Therapy Service here:

www.venturetrust.org.uk/programmes/outdoor-therapy/

Please find a link to the Outdoor Therapy 2022 Impact Report here:

www.venturetrust.org.uk/publications_cpt/outdoor-therapy-impact-report-2021-22/

Please find a link to Venture Trust's 2023 Impact Report here:

<https://www.venturetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Venture-Trust-Impact-Report-2022-23-1.pdf>

Feedback from Course Participants

"This training felt like a gentle but powerful shift into a more connected way of working. The inspiring space, facilitation and exercises encouraged me to consider the influence and meaning that different spaces and places - in particular, natural spaces- can bring to our inner experience, how we reflect on them, and can benefit from them. This was a valuable experience exploring themes, dynamics, and the more practical aspects of outdoor therapy, thank you."

- Course Participant

"I really valued the mix of experiential exercises combined with learning about theory and the practical elements of outdoor therapy work. I feel as though I got a good sense of how outdoor therapy might be beneficial to my clients and my organisation. I felt the training was geared towards my work context and considerations with my client group."

- Course Participant Bespoke Training

"The training offered me an introduction to working therapeutically in natural environments. I felt that the way the training was held and facilitated allowed me to have a feel of how therapeutic work might take place in outdoors environments. I valued the group discussion and reflection, as well as the individual activities. These allowed me to develop my thinking and understanding of outdoor therapy. Thank you so much!"

- Course Participant

About the Training Facilitators

The training programmes are designed and run by the Outdoor Therapy Service team. The team is made up of accredited therapists and counsellors of varying modalities, some of whom also hold professional outdoor qualifications.

All facilitators are registered with BACP, UKCP, BPC COSCA, BAAT or an equivalent governing body.

All facilitators have worked in or are currently working in outdoor or wilderness environments.

Katarina Horrox

Katarina Horrox is the Clinical Practice Manager at Venture Trust. She is an art psychotherapist registered with the British Association of Art Therapists and a psychodynamic organisational therapist registered with the British Psychoanalytic Council. She has worked in community, institutional and outdoor settings. She has worked as an outdoor therapist, as well as leading psychodynamic wilderness therapy programmes in the Scottish Highlands. She is a representative of The International and European Adventure Therapy Committees and a member of the European Art Therapy Federation.



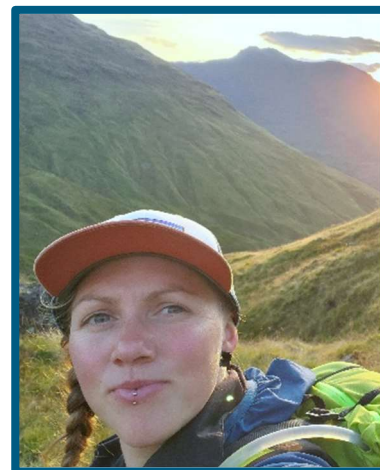
Rich Tildesley

Rich Tildesley (Tilly) is the Outdoor Practice and Development Manager at Venture Trust. He is a MBACP registered counsellor and is a Senior Associate Member of the Association for Psychodynamic Practice and Counselling in Organisational Settings. He has over 20 years of experience in working with marginalised groups in the outdoors in remote locations throughout the world. He was the Senior Development Trainer on the Venture Mòr Wilderness Therapy programme, the first of its kind in the UK. He has a BSc (hons) in Conservation and Countryside Management an MSc in Outdoor, Environmental and Sustainability Education, a PGDip in Human Relations and Psychodynamic Counselling and is an experienced MTA Mountain Leader.



Avril Leonard

Avril Leonard is Venture Trust's Clinical Practice Manager (Maternity cover) and an Outdoor Therapist at Venture Trust. Avril has 15 years of experience working in a variety of education, outdoor and community settings with marginalised groups as an educator, facilitator and therapist. She has led personal development programmes/expeditions in remote outdoor locations around the world. She is a qualified MTA Mountain Leader, Rock Climbing Instructor and Level 2 Mountain Bike leader. Avril holds a BA (hons) in Outdoor Education, MSc in Person Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy and is a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.



Nova Pinfold

Nova Pinfold is a Senior Outdoor Therapist with Venture Trust. Nova is a qualified Pluralistic Counsellor. Her background is in holistic therapies, expressive arts, and child development. Nova began working as an Outdoor Practitioner for an award winning, nomadic Early Years setting in 2009, before training and working in the Substance Use field where she provided specialist intensive and therapeutic support for children, their parents, and families. Nova is an experienced Outdoor Practitioner facilitating Outdoor Education and Nature Connection training for community, education, statutory and third sector organisations. Nova holds a membership with COSCA.



Mark Rae

Mark Rae is an Outdoor Therapist at Venture Trust's Outdoor Therapy service. He is a registered member of COSCA with a range of qualifications and experience. He has been working to facilitate healthy change in individuals, groups and families in a variety of settings for the past 20 years. He has a Diploma in Integrative Counselling, a Degree in Core Process Psychotherapy; a Bsc Business Management degree, a Masters in Social Work, a Postgraduate in Child Welfare and Development and a Practice Educators Award. Mark supports and assesses social work students on placement within Venture Trust and is currently supporting counselling students within the Outdoor Therapy service.



For more information:

Visit our website:

venturetrust.org.uk/outdoorthrapytraining

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Venture Trust is a registered charity in Scotland (SC038932) and
England and Wales (285891).