

## DR ALYSON COLEMAN

**Job title**

Senior Lecturer in Drama and Movement Therapy

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### COURSES

Drama and Movement Therapy, MA

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### PROFILE

As a working dramatherapist, I bring over twenty years of clinical experience to my role of lecturer on the [MA Drama and Movement Therapy](#). My strong interest in theatre began at the age of sixteen with a Performing Arts Diploma at Italia Conti Academy of Performing Arts, followed by several years of professional acting and dancing. Theatre workshops with older adults in nursing home settings introduced me to how drama enabled people to tell their stories, be moved by their experiences and get in touch with hidden aspects of themselves.

Impacted by these early experiences I studied for a PGDip in Drama and Movement Therapy (Sesame), here, at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 1995. Since graduating I have worked with many different client groups in social, health and educational settings. Part of early academic development was a research MA in 2001 looking at a dramatherapy group of boys in a Pupil Referral Unit with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The findings of this project sparked my interest in the emotional, behavioural and psychological impact that bereavement and loss may result in. Ali Kelly, a Central alumni/dramatherapist colleague, and I set up an NHS, core funded children's bereavement service within the London Borough of Croydon.

In effect my working week is a partnership of training student Dramatherapists and creative arts supervisors, dramatherapy clinical practice and supervision.

My professional doctorate, funded by an NHS scholarship and completed in 2015, focused on dramatherapists' experience of working with children with life limiting or life threatening illness. Part of the research involved focus groups with palliative care paediatric nurses, special educational needs school staff and therapists working with this client group. Out of the heuristic research phase I devised the play 'How Do You Think I Feel' which was performed several times as part of my dissemination of findings. During this exciting time I also won the Jennifer Elton Wilson Award for an 'outstanding Professional Knowledge' paper at Middlesex University. Elements of this research is included in my co-authored book: *Child Agency and Voice In Therapy: New Ways of Working with the Arts Therapies*, Routledge: (2021)

I am Course Leader of the [Creative Arts Supervision Training Diploma](#) (CAST) This part time, one year training brings together drama, art, music and dance movement therapists, alongside counsellors and psychotherapists to train in the craft of clinical supervision.

I served as Chair of The British Association for Dramatherapists (BADth) 2017 - 2019 which involved a key leadership and management role within the development of dramatherapy in the UK and internationally. Part of this important work involved approaching the issue of widening participation and diversity within the profession.

As a continued commitment to the development of arts therapies, I sit on the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) registration and CPD panel, having contributed for 14 years within the Fitness To Practice department.

A Post Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning (2019) and an array of further trainings and Continued Professional Development support my teaching, thinking and professional practice.

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## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Dramatherapy with children with life limiting or life threatening conditions and or their siblings.
- Co- facilitation in dramatherapy.
- Childhood bereavement training for academic, health, social services and educational professionals.
- Organisational consultancy specifically for bereavement charities, services

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## KEY PUBLICATIONS

2020. Coleman, Alyson, Jones, Phil, Cedar, Lynn, Haythorne, Deborah, Mercieca, Daniel and Ramsden, Emma [\*Child Agency of Working in the Arts Therapies: New Ways of Working in the Arts Therapies\*](#). Routledge, Abingdon. ISBN 9780367861629

### Book Chapters

2017. Coleman, Alyson [\*Two to One\*](#). In: *Dramatherapy: Reflections and Praxis*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 123-143. ISBN 9781137604323

2012. Coleman, Alyson [\*Collaborative Partnerships in Schools and Beyond : Learning Disabilities and Finding, Keeping and Protecting the Therapeutic Space\*](#). In: *Dramatherapy with Children, Young People and Schools : Enabling Creativity, Sociability, Communication and Learning*. Routledge, London.