

## I MATTER TRAINING – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – INITIAL LEARNING AGREEMENTS

Hello my name is Dr Cathy Betoin, I'm an experienced clinical psychologist and teacher.

Welcome to the start of an I Matter Journey and to the I Matter Relationship Health Community!

I am excited you are wanting to learn about how to help your anxious or challenging child in a home or work role without feeling you are making it all up as you go along or trying to figure it out all on your own. 😊

Here in the community and through the journey I focus on helping you understand what the research evidence on children's wellbeing is really saying. In particular I focus on helping you to understand what it is really telling us about your own important role in improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. The good news is that You, and every single person can really make a difference!

I have decided to share a few key principles at the very start of this journey because as you go forward you are going to be covering a large amount of really important ideas that will help you to be effective whether in a work or in a home role – or both. Some of the IMatter ideas will feel familiar. What is different is how we piece them together into the I Matter Framework to help support your clarity & effective decision making.

However this learning process also usually involves you doing some rethinking and this in turn can bring up lots of questions – some of which I have learned it is best to address right at the start.

1. **Why a Journey? The I Matter Journey is carefully structured in stages** so as to offer the possibilities of support for your thinking over a longer term period as this is generally key to seeing results if you are trying to support any child who is anxious or challenging, in any setting. Everyone starts out on Awareness stage. Later there is a stage for organisations called Bridging, and a Stage 1 Extended Journey for members where you can get support in putting learning into practice and a Stage 2 for supporting other adults who are taking part in an I Matter Journey. There are different areas in our membership site for each stage and for each role.
2. **Who is it for? I Matter Training is for a wide range of adults & young people** including parents-carers who are preparing for their role, or for parents-carers where there are some raised concerns, or for professionals. As a professional you could be in a direct care role, or you could be in a senior leadership role, or you could work with parents. If you are a parent-carer of a child with some raised concerns, then you will need to complete an in-depth online questionnaire and an initial consultation in order to take part. This helps us to help you ensure that participation in an I Matter Journey will bring about results for you. It helps us match you with others with similar needs and with support that is suitable.
3. **How does it work? The delivery of I Matter Training always takes place using supported online learning.** This allows us to share the core ideas of the I Matter Framework with you and others in a very consistent fashion. The course structure supports you in a process of doing a lot of personal reflection. Your reflections are private and will not be shared. We can read what you write but we do not read everything. However, completing the online reflections is required to be eligible for the different steps of the I Matter Awards. Think of the questions as giving you a space to think about important issues – this is a learning journey that you will get most out of through making time and space for this reflection.
4. **What about Data Protection? The storage of your data online adheres to the principles of GDPR and data protection.** We advise however that you should never use the names of your child or family members or colleagues – and should instead use initials or screen names. If you are not comfortable with data being stored online please do not progress with this training. Be respectful in everything.
5. **What's involved? At Awareness and Stage 1 of training, you are being trained to think in an I Matter Fashion, starting with your own relationship with a focus child who has some challenges.** This could be

[www.imattertraining.com](http://www.imattertraining.com)

## I MATTER TRAINING – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – INITIAL LEARNING AGREEMENTS

a child at home, or a child that you have a professional relationship with (eg >10hrs a week) current or past. The goal of the training is to help you have insights that will help you take steps to move your relationship with this focus child in the direction of happier and healthier functioning. The responsibility is on you to learn how to make the helpful changes

6. **What can you do with your training and course resources?** I Matter Training is NOT A TRAIN THE TRAINER SYSTEM. The purpose and use of the I Matter resources and tools that you will be introduced to are to inform your own thinking and everyday actions *in personal direct roles with children or in direct professional roles*. The resources are NOT for sharing with or distributing with others. If you have a printed set of course notes they are for your own use only. Instead you are being trained to observe and think and act differently yourself around your child and others. When you observe and think differently about issues, it will become very natural to you to take different actions. In fact it will seem so obvious that you will wonder why it isn't obvious to others and you will probably want others to understand. So others that you work with or live with may be interested in learning more but you should encourage them to take part in their own I Matter Journey. It is not your role to train others because when things have been stuck the learning process is sensitive. If you approach things in a rush you can make things worse. So, If you want others to learn about I Matter in your setting then they can talk to us, or you can yourself train to Stage 3 and learn to support others yourself. This involves a longer term commitment.
7. **How can I describe myself after the training?** After Awareness training you can describe yourself as I Matter Informed or as using I Matter Principles (this will refer to your understanding in your decision making of the central importance of adult-child relationship health). To be certified as an I Matter Practitioner you must work for Stage 2 requirements in a Lead or Advanced Practitioner role.
8. **What about Confidentiality? The I Matter Community makes available the insights I have gathered together from more than 30 years of practice with children and families and grows in response to your questions.** In the course of your I Matter Training you may take part in group learning situations with others – in targeted groups. Please remember that though everyone is asked to respect the confidentiality of others, it will remain your responsibility to keep yourself and others safe by not sharing sensitive details online or in a group setting. You will be offered the facility to submit questions anonymously and no-one is required to participate in group learning in order to take part.
9. **Is I Matter Training a therapy or a parenting course? I Matter Training is not therapy, or counselling, though it can have therapeutic results. It is not simply a parenting course.** Instead, it offers you some advanced insights and skills building options to support you in your role with children and other adults. We may sometimes offer recommendations but you should always bear in mind that we do not know you or your child or situations as you do, and so you should never ignore your own judgement or what others have said as a result of something you have heard in the course of an I Matter consultation. You remain responsible at all times for the decisions and actions that you choose to take.
10. **How long does it take to see results? We describe I Matter Training as offering a journey because we do not offer any quick fixes** though most people find that an understanding of the I Matter Framework helps them to see a lot of complex situations more clearly in quite a short space of time. Every person's I Matter Journey is different. However, the only way to see real results for most people is to commit to a longer-term learning process and to be willing to make some changes yourself. Each person's journey is unique. However, the shared principle is that though this changing can sometimes feel a little uncomfortable, for you and for your child when you change, then you create the conditions in which your child and others can change. Our shared goal is healthier happier relationships.

## I MATTER TRAINING – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – INITIAL LEARNING AGREEMENTS

11. **Will there be results? To see results from your I Matter Training will involve a personal commitment from you.** Some people are able to have quite a lot of personal 1:1 support with their I Matter Journey but some commit to the process and just use the group support options. There is always a need to make the personal commitment to be open and determined to learn and to keep persevering until you have restored the healthier, happier relationship that you want – first in your home relationships, then in work situations and then in your community. We do not put any time scales on how long this process will take. For some it is quite quick. For others it can take longer. However, we love sharing I Matter with professionals and parents and those in leadership positions as we have seen that with willingness to do the work, it is never too late to see significant positive results.
12. **What about safeguarding? I Matter Practice is governed by safeguarding legislation.** In practice with children who are anxious or challenging, situations can emerge which are complex and escalated. This is the reason that all parents-carers of a child with raised concerns must have the support of a named professional who is I Matter Trained. However, we are not a crisis intervention service so you should ensure adequate support for yourself outside of the community. If we are concerned for any reason about your entries on the site, or our ability to be helpful at a given time, we will share our concerns and reserve the right to discontinue our services to you.
13. **What do I do if I have a concern, a compliment or a complaint? Please remember that we are learning too – so your feedback matters:** I Matter Training is trying to offer professionals and parents something new because there has been a gap in services and clear thinking in this area of helping children who are anxious and challenging. We may not always get everything right, so we value your feedback and your encouragement. If you have a concern, please contact us at the earliest possible date so that we can do our best to address it promptly.
14. **Can you sum up what I can and can't do?** In sum, The I Matter journey is about you learning to see and do things differently so that you can lead by example through your own attitudes and actions. Any course resources are for your own private use to inform your own thinking and actions. For example, you might work through them to think about a child or family that you are working with to help inform your next steps. At Awareness stage you are not a certified I Matter Practitioner but you can describe your parenting or professional practice as 'informed by I Matter Principles'.
15. **Why is I Matter training offered with these restrictions?** The content of I Matter training was put together over more than 20 years in response to a big gap seen in services for children and families. It is very carefully designed so it can help a wide range of adults and vulnerable children and the order and tone of the way we do things is key to our results. We know that teaching things in the wrong order can make key messages difficult to understand, we know people must be ready to learn & support is key,
16. **What can I do to help share the ideas more widely?** If you decide you would be interested in supporting the use of the resources in a professional role or as a parent mentor then you can apply at the end of Awareness stage to join the Stage 1 Extended Journey and Stage 2 Supporting Others training which involves a longer term commitment.

Finally, the only reason to take part in this community is if you are someone who is committed to developing your own insight and skills so that you can contribute to happier healthier relationships for young people and the adults who support them. This does not happen all at once. If that is what you want for yourself and for others in your home and work community, I am excited to meet you.

You can read the full details of our [Terms and conditions here](#). To progress with this journey, please digitally sign the agreement to say that you have read and accept the above. Last Updated: June 5<sup>th</sup> 2021

[www.imattertraining.com](http://www.imattertraining.com)