

## **Tertiary Education Scholarship Scheme**

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My journey started whilst reading for a Bachelor's degree in Psychology at the University of Malta. I was introduced to Family Therapy and was instantly intrigued by the concept of including the family in therapy; thus seeing the system as a whole rather than the individual. After finishing my degree, I started my career as a Mental Health Recovery Officer within Villa Chelsea, part of Richmond Foundation. It was here that I fully recognised the importance of involving the family in the recovery process of the client. The aim of the program is to foster skills of independent living, such as activities of daily living: cooking, cleaning and filling in the dosage box, amongst other skills. Malta is very family oriented and most times, after completing their programme, clients either move back home to live with their family, or live independently and have a very important tie with their family. Realising this, and having worked for a year in my job, I recognised my need to continue studying further to accurately and knowledgeably include families in the rehabilitative process of my clients. I thus pursued a Post Graduate Diploma in Systemic Family Psychotherapy with the Institute of Family Therapy Malta; this would not have been possible without the funding of the Tertiary Education Scholarship Scheme. The changes I have made during the following two years of the course have been widespread, amongst others, including family members during keyworking sessions with clients, using more reflexive and circular questions, as well as ensuring that clients are always in the room when we have case consultations thus ensuring collaborative and transparent practice.

Our family affects who we are and who we become, both for better and for worse. Family therapy offers families a way to develop or maintain healthy, functional relations, in turn benefitting society. This journey has been a transformative one, and has led to many changes in both my personal and professional life. These, I believe, are the most significant outcomes of learning. The journey undertaken so far and the knowledge gained would not have been possible without the concrete support and funding of the *Tertiary Education Scholarship Scheme*.