

Curiouser and Curiouser: Reflective, Regulated Practice in the Wonderland of Play Workshop

This experiential workshop unfolds across four structured landmarks:

1. Down the Rabbit Hole – Entering the Regulation Lag

Participants explore practitioner self-regulation as foundational intervention. Regulation Lag—the space between trigger and response—is introduced as the core site of reflective practice. Guided embodied reflection supports awareness of how activation influences tone, language, and autonomy.

2. The Shifting Landscape – Play as Nervous System Language

Participants deepen understanding of play as regulation communication, tracking rhythm, repetition, proximity, intensity, and control within symbolic and narrative play. Clinical application is emphasised.

3. The Queen of Demands – Autonomy as Regulatory Protection

Demand sensitivity is reframed as nervous system protection rather than defiance. Participants practice language shifts that widen choice, reduce shame, and maintain relational safety.

4. Drawing the Map – Family Stress and Reflective Integration

Family burnout, advocacy fatigue, and systemic strain are explored as influences on play themes. Participants complete a guided “Wonderland Map” reflective artefact to consolidate learning and support sustained reflective practice.

Presenter: Kelly Walker



Kelly Walker is an ACA Level 4 Clinical Counsellor, Certified Synergetic Play Therapist, and Clinical Counselling and Play Therapy Supervisor. She currently works in private practice in Sunbury, Victoria, supporting children, adolescents, and families experiencing neurodivergence, trauma, emotional dysregulation, and complex relational stress. Her approach integrates Synergetic Play Therapy, relational neuroscience, trauma-informed practice, and autonomy-supportive frameworks within a neurodiversity-affirming lens. Kelly is deeply committed to helping practitioners

understand play as communication of the nervous system rather than behaviour to manage. Through supervision and experiential workshops, she supports counsellors, educators, and allied health professionals to strengthen reflective capacity, sustain regulation in high-intensity clinical moments, and remain relationally present with autonomy-seeking children and stressed families navigating complex systems.