

ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of the impact of Gestalt therapy on Gestalt therapists' relationships with their children using a phenomenological method of research.

Literature on the changing nature of childhood, Psychoanalytic and Gestalt development theory, the therapeutic relationship and parenting has been reviewed and discussed in relation to the findings. The data was generated through informal interviews, analysed using a phenomenological approach, and organized into two distinct areas of interrelated themes. The themes describe the participants' experience of parenting in their family of origin, their personal experience of parenting, and how Gestalt therapy has impacted their relationship with their children. A statement of the essence of their experiences is provided. The purpose of this study was to gain more understanding of what aspects of Gestalt therapy are helpful in enabling parents to provide "good enough" (Winnicott, 1965f:57) parenting for their children.

The implications the findings have for Gestalt psychotherapy practice are considered, and possible future research is explored.