

# ABSTRACT

## ATTUNEMENT AND MIRRORING

Homologies between parent-child interactions during early childhood development and the psychotherapeutic relationship are examined, with particular reference to attunement and mirroring. This is achieved by:

- exploring from attachment, developmental and neuroscientific perspectives, the impact of maternal depression on infant brain development
- considering the possible sequelae in adulthood of misattunement and lack of mirroring in early childhood
- assessing the role of psychotherapy, particularly the person-centred approach, and the effect of attunement and mirroring.

A single case study is presented to illustrate these themes.

*To ensure my client's anonymity I have changed her name and minor identifying details. Since my client is a woman I use 'she' and 'her' but where I have used quotes verbatim often 'he' or 'his' is used instead; likewise American spelling is unchanged in quotes. An infant's primary relationship may be with another caregiver other than her mother but here I refer only to maternal care because this was my client's experience. I use the terms psychotherapy, therapy and counselling interchangeably.*

Word Count: 18,911