

Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the client experience of working with insecure attachment in integrative psychotherapy. I chose to use a heuristic methodology as I wanted to look for the meaning in human experience (Moustakas 1985) and as the research subject I selected felt, very primary and emergent, a heuristic approach reliant on relational co-created meaning felt appropriate. I interviewed three participants, student psychotherapists, who had at some stage identified themselves to me as having an experience of insecure attachment. The themes, which emerged from the data, were the parentified child, reparation in the therapeutic relationship and sameness and difference in the mother/therapist relationship. In the practise of integrative psychotherapy the therapist attunes simultaneously to the perspective of what a child needs and how he/she processes experiences. This provides potential for development and integration. My research substantiates the need for such an approach and highlights that attachment calls for complex, non-linear explanation (Sroufe et al 2000)