

## **Abstract**

This research explored the experience and understanding of a client's sense of belonging and the impact of person centred theory upon their sense of belonging. It was argued within the literature review that past definitions of belonging did not tell us about the experiencing of belonging. Nine participants were interviewed and a phenomenological reduction took place to discern key themes. The main themes of acceptance, longing, risk, reflections of self, being seen, comfort, felt in the moment and can't be faked were identified as part of the experience. It was understood as an ongoing process, a two-way thing and that an 'encircled' self was an important feature of the 'ability' to belong. Therapy was found to increase participants' awareness of their expectations within relationship and foster self-acceptance, both of which had a positive impact upon their ability to belong. Findings were understood to have confirmed and extended previous research, and that a person centred perspective may have an important perspective to offer current debates about belonging.