

Abstract

This phenomenological study was designed to understand the experience of un-notified client non-attendance for trainee therapists. Eight trainee therapists from a variety of training institutes and placement settings took part in semi-structured interviews. Meaning statements were extracted from the data and these were analysed and grouped into categories. The themes presented in the findings included: therapist affect ranging from frustration, anger and worry to surprise, confusion and relief; feelings of not being 'good enough'; a need to use time meaningfully, and to process feelings in some way; and a recognition that these reactions altered over time as a result of learning and experience. An exhaustive description has been provided to give an insight into the essence of experience of un-notified client non-attendance for trainee therapists.

These results indicated that trainee therapists often struggled with their responses to un-notified client non-attendance and although they had a need to process their experience, they sometimes found it difficult to seek support because of feelings of inadequacy and shame.