

## **Abstract**

This phenomenological study was undertaken to explore how person-centred psychotherapists understand, experience and relate to the psychiatric medical model. Eight participants with varying degrees of experience of working with or within the medical model took part in semi structured interviews. All participants had a primary or secondary training in the person-centred modality. Data was analysed and six key thematic areas emerged from which an exhaustive description was generated.

The results indicated a philosophical and clinical opposition to the medical model, but an opposition that was mitigated to a large extent by recognising values and benefits of the medical model also. In the midst of these conflicting positions the theme of pragmatic balancing emerged as central to how practitioners reconciled these two opposing perspective, whereby they were able to achieve a respectful awareness of both positions. This theme has possible far reaching implications for future research, theoretical development and the refinement of training provision.