

## **ABSTRACT**

This phenomenological study explored the experience of six integrative psychotherapists working with eating disorder clients in an outpatient service setting and in private practice. It aimed to describe the understanding and accounts given of how they work with and evaluate success with this client group. The Findings presented common elements of an integrative approach founded upon an understanding of the relational and developmental needs of clients. Common themes and traits encountered with this client group were indicated, together with the challenges they present and the breadth of interventions found helpful for responding to them. The role of assessment and stages in therapy were described. Dual goals of therapy were indicated in relation to the eating disorder symptoms and underlying self issues, with success measured and understood in terms of both. The implications for the practice of integrative psychotherapy were considered and recommendations made on future training and research needs.