

Abstract

I like to see time, reality or the person as a canvas we continually paint onto. There is no going backward or forward. There is only now. What we paint if we paint at all is up to us. The paints, colours, brushes and techniques we have available vary, equipped by our learning how to paint, the picture collaborative, how our parents painted for us and onto us. Indeed relationship is like others painting on our canvas. I see my task as a relational therapist as one of helping clients: "Paint the flying spirit of the bird rather than its feathers" – Robert Henri (2014).

The purpose of this dissertation is to develop my understanding of the self and relationship from a humanistic and integrative perspective. I will show how we develop in a nurturing environment, how we adapt to survive and how relationship heals. I use a case study methodology to show my therapeutic intent in clinical practice. This dissertation is structured into three component parts. My rationale for practice, a literature review and finally a case study.

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