

## ABSTRACT

This study explores how a therapist with an avoidant attachment style manages contact in the therapeutic relationship.

The research highlighted that, whilst there was an abundance of literature looking at how adult attachment styles influence psychotherapeutic processes, there was very little that considered the 'here and now' interaction of therapist and client attachment and how the therapist could manage that.

I explored the origins of attachment theory in the field of psychotherapy to identify the characteristics of an avoidant attachment style. I then carried out a literature review to analyse how the fundamental aspects of the therapeutic relationship may be affected by avoidant traits and behaviours.

Through literary research, clinical practice and personal experience I discovered that contact can be managed effectively with good use of supervision, an ability to regulate affect and engagement of a robust internal supervisor. Informed by the findings from the literature review, the case study in this piece of work demonstrates how I managed contact in my clinical practice with a client who had a similar avoidant style of relating.