

## **Abstract**

Mindfulness is a Buddhist concept encompassing a focused adherence to the present moment of consciousness. Mindfulness has been embraced and researched in psychology as a therapeutic tool for clients. However, the aim of this research project was to explore how therapists experience and understand mindfulness in their client work, particularly in the therapeutic relationship. Four experienced Integrative psychotherapists who had a personal mindfulness practice were invited to share their experiences and understanding via semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Five super-ordinate themes were identified: Searching; Work and practice; Inwards to a secure base; Outwards to clients; Outwards to a larger whole. These were presented schematically to illustrate their overlapping and dynamic relationship. Participants were clear that mindfulness starts with a personal embodied practice leading to a deep acceptance of one's self. Following this, participants reported an increased awareness of self, a greater degree of attunement with clients, and an enhanced ability to sit with difficult emotions and unconscious processes. Relationships beyond the dyad were impacted by mindfulness as it became threaded throughout participants' lives. Mindfulness clearly impacted participants' work with clients through enhancing their intersubjective experience and ability to be in relationship with themselves and with clients.