

ABSTRACT

Retroreflection is an ubiquitous process within daily normal human relating. Rooted in the Gestalt theory of interruptions to the cycle of contact, psychotherapeutic theory seeks to explore the interpersonal and intrapsychic dynamics of this process and how it can sometimes block healthy relationships with our environment. This dissertation considers how broader concepts related to Retroreflection, such as 'holding back' and 'hidden self' are understood across a wider range of theorists, looking ultimately to explore how a Humanistic and Integrative practitioner can describe and fully appreciate the complex developmental and unconscious relationships between self and self, and self and other. Through the presentation of a rationale for practice, literature review and case study, I show my commitment to the quality, efficacy and ethical nature of my professional development. The case study specifically focuses on how retroflective processes may be played out in the therapeutic relationship and how they may be worked through and used for the benefit of my client. I conclude that the complexity inherent in retroflective processes and their accompanying defences, such as shame, need careful, patient holding and kindness to allow safe, growthful undoing.