

Abstract.

This dissertation uses a case study methodology to explore how a therapist can communicate her authenticity within the therapeutic relationship, particularly in a relational approach. A therapist's authenticity is not a skill that can be switched on and off at will, more that is a personal attribute which the therapist brings to the relationship. Personal authenticity is multi-faceted with both internal and external factors.

The rationale outlines my approach based on my philosophy and personal beliefs, describing how I am developing a relational approach to my work.

There is much debate around how a therapist can communicate her authenticity, in particular self-disclosure. The literature review explores the issues around this, underlining the importance of therapeutic intent when any decision to self-disclose is made.

The case study examines the centrality of the therapist's authenticity in a relational approach. How unconscious processes may affect the authentic connection between the therapist and the client, and the importance of identifying and working through such processes.