

Abstract

The phenomenon of the therapist's desire to offer a persecutory response to client is a concept that has received limited consideration within previous psychotherapeutic research. Contentiously this may be argued is due to challenges in aligning this with traditional psychotherapeutic principles. This research was undertaken with the intent of offering illumination of the therapist's experience of this desire within the therapeutic dyad. This heuristic research project was undertaken within a postmodernist framework of qualitative semi-structured singular interviews with 4 qualified psychotherapists with over 2 years' post-qualification experience, alongside the researcher's own responses to the interview questions. All interviews were then transcribed and coded, discussed and critically reflected upon. Emergent themes from both individual and composite portraits highlighted the individuality of every therapist's personal experiences of the research phenomenon born from both their own relational history and the co-created dynamic with their client. However, overarching themes were highlighted such as the therapist perceiving an impasse within the therapy and also them seeking to integrate hidden parts of self in order to be more complete in the therapeutic relationship. Thus, the qualitative nature of this research offered an in depth and richer insight into this phenomenon than had previously been discussed within psychotherapeutic research, with the intent of offering a language and the potential for further exploration into the experience and humanness of the therapist in regards to the research phenomenon.