

1) Abstract

This research sought to identify what the experience of being offered psychological contact in long term person centred therapy was like, for survivors of childhood abuse.

The rationale of this research:

- To enhance the researcher's professional therapeutic work with survivors.
- To provide research of value to other therapists working in this field.
- A response to researcher's personal interest in this experience, in the light her experience of psychological contact in therapy, beyond historical childhood abuse.
- Inspired by the researcher's awareness of a research gap.

This research was a piece of qualitative, phenomenological research using the Duquesne 6 step method of data analysis. It produced a final exhaustive account in response to the research question. The data comprised the transcripts of four semi structured interviews. Survivors did experience psychological contact in therapy. They found this experience to be a dance with shades of contact and movement between times of closeness, distance and rupture. Often they experienced a magical and transpersonal depth in contact with their therapist. At times contact was challenging and a difficult experience. This contact was deeply precious, unique and healing and allowed closer contact for the client in other relationships and in the future.