

Abstract

It is not uncommon for clients to bring photographs into the therapy room; however, this occurrence isn't documented within the PC world. Through the knowledge of the impact CSA has on the self-concept (Murphy and Joseph, 2014), the benefits of using photographs in therapy could hold the key to working with survivors.

This study explores the idea of using childhood photographs in therapy with survivors of CSA and focuses on the impact the experience has on their self-regard. The researcher provides a broad overview of the existing literature of Phototherapy, demonstrating how the findings link to PC theory and the implications for survivors of CSA.

Using an IPA approach, 4 participants were subjected to a semi-structured interview, all of whom had previous experience with clients who were survivors of CSA and discussed childhood photographs in the session.

Results suggest that the use of a childhood photograph has helped to break through distortions by seeing the reality of being a child in the photograph, through this realisation clients were then able to identify their vulnerability at the time, helping to explore who was actually responsible. In turn, clients were then able to take actions towards looking after themselves, giving themselves what they needed and were lacking in childhood, also referred to as re-parenting. A discussion of the strengths and limitations of this study is also presented.