

Abstract

Within the person-centred and experiential literature there is an increasing amount of emphasis placed on the necessity for PCE therapists to be fully present in relationship with their clients. The therapist's quality of presence is viewed as essential for the establishment of a therapeutic alliance or bond with clients capable of awakening their inner resources for growth and healing.

The author, a PCE therapist in training and the sole researcher for this paper, has been intrigued by concepts associated with presence for some time. Having a deep desire to enrich his own capacity to be fully present in relationship with his clients has provided the motivation for this qualitative study using a pragmatic approach to capture his current capacity to be fully present within client-therapist relationships.

This case study research project focused on listening to/reflecting on 'Session 20' of a real-life audio-recorded therapy session. Hearing the recording evoked many feelings in the researcher. However it was the analysis of the transcription and the incorporation of evaluation tools including the PCEP Scales, IPR, TPI-T and TPI-C that really facilitated the research process, enhanced learning and led to some new discoveries.

The findings of this research indicate that being fully present as a therapist is quite a difficult state to achieve. Presence ebbs and flows. Striving to be present is counter-productive and intersectionality issues matter. Presence has to manifest and unfold naturally, it cannot be forced. The intention to be present in our work as therapists is fundamental for discovering our own idiosyncratic ways to cultivate and increase our capacity to become fully present.