

ABSTRACT

This dissertation considers the application of Attachment Theory to Humanistic and Integrative practice and explores how a psychotherapist with an insecure-ambivalent attachment style may identify and work effectively with a client with an insecure-ambivalent attachment style.

I outline my rationale for practice, highlighting the centrality of the therapeutic relationship in the process of change and growth. The literature around insecure-ambivalent and adult preoccupied attachment presentations is reviewed, with an emphasis on the implications for therapeutic practice. Utilising a case study, the therapist's role as an attachment figure is examined, in providing a secure base and corrective emotional experience to promote earned security. Core anxieties, creative adjustments and unconscious processes typically manifesting with preoccupied clients are explored. The impact of the therapist's attachment history is considered, with particular reference to unconscious processes and ability to foster an effective working alliance. This dissertation highlights key factors influencing the therapist's ability to provide a secure base to facilitate the insecure-ambivalent client's transition towards autonomy, emotional regulation and earned security.