

## Abstract

This research study investigated whether and how integrative psychotherapists experienced power dynamics in the psychotherapy relationship. It aimed to present participants' subjective experiences through a phenomenological methodology, providing a description of those experiences following in-depth semi-structured interviews (Moustakas, 1994). My approach was underpinned by a qualitative philosophy concerned with understanding human experience (Mintz, 2010.) The findings demonstrated that integrative practitioners experienced power dynamics in relationship and because of my method a number of subordinate themes emerged from across participants' accounts including experiencing power differential and imbalance and the relationship between power dynamics and payment. These insights were limited in scope and by my research methodology but have contributed to a wider understanding of the phenomenon of power within integrative psychotherapy and made a difference to practice. Little research in this area speaks from a relational, developmental perspective and I feel my research has developed the field. To me 'being' an integrative psychotherapist means putting the need for relationship at the heart of the human experience (Klein, 1987) and because of that I feel relational contact is central to what it means to be human (Erskine, 2011). Being in relationship offers the prospect of love and understanding and the potential for shared expression, emotion and support (McKinney, 2009). My research found that in the therapeutic relationship power dynamics were complicated and ever present, an intricate, interdependent dance between the therapist and client.