

Abstract.

This dissertation explores the Gestalt concept of the void, and nothingness more generally, as central to the human condition, and therefore key in the therapeutic relationship. It focusses particularly on the phenomenological experiences of therapist and client.

I outline my rationale for an integrative practice, with the relationship, and an attitude of creative indifference, at the core. The literature around nothingness as it pertains to psychotherapy is reviewed, with consideration given to its potential effects on a dialogic therapeutic encounter. A case study of client work is provided to display the application of my rationale. It explores the relationship as primarily healing, focussing on the intersubjective dynamics, as affected by both parties' relational histories and unconscious processes. Consideration is given to the unknown elements within – the polarities and paradoxes inevitable in relational work.