

Abstract

The impact of becoming a mother is profound and long-lasting (Stern, 1995) and as such deserves consideration in the field of Humanistic and Integrative psychotherapy. Using a literature review and case study methodology, this dissertation explores working from a perspective that treats motherhood as an important developmental stage (Erskine and Trautmann, 1996), with a potential impact on the sense of Self.

The author provides an introduction to the topic and their Humanistic and Integrative rationale for therapeutic work. A literature review shows three key themes: the experience of motherhood as expansive to the self, the relevance of the mother's early relationships to how she experiences motherhood, and the culturally defined nature of motherhood. Two key texts are then discussed in more detail. A case study is used to show how motherhood impacts the client's sense of self and the therapeutic relationship, drawing on Fisher's structural dissociation model (2017). The dissertation shows the relevance of the experience of motherhood to Humanistic and Integrative counselling.