

Introduction

In this work I intend to explore working with Relational Trauma. I present what I have learnt through my working case study and literature review and process of my own reflections as a trainee therapist and demonstrate ethical, safe boundaries within my work according to the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP, 2018), ethical framework and Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute (SPTI, 2018).

During this year at Sherwood and within my own therapy, I have become aware of how my own self-formation in childhood came to be, and how this was compromised with my own trauma. I recognise a need for 'creative adjustments' (Perls et al, 1951) which I made to survive. Traumatic relationships in adulthood compounded my feelings of indifference which led me to a self-doubting, insecure adult me where meaning and function had become separate (Fisher & Ogden, 2009).

Whilst researching this subject it became more apparent that my need for control was borne from my own trauma and historical events which had led to my low self-esteem (Stern, 1985). My expectations of people were shattered by lack of protection from main caregivers. I found reasons a need to be in control and maintain patterns finding roles as the controller and the responsible adult (Clarkson, 1995, Taylor, 2014). I believe suffering is alleviated by therapy and promotes positive change.

I took a gap year before my final year. Starting the third year I became even more anxious but through safe exploration of this in my new group and in personal therapy I realised my process style which made such clear sense; that I was splitting off parts of myself, subpersonalities were emerging (Rowan &