

What are client's experiences of shame and compliance in relationship? A Transcendental Phenomenological qualitative study with a focus on the co-creation of shame activating defences in relationship and their role in self-esteem through dissociative defences against shame and the importance of this to developmental-relational psychotherapy.

Abstract

This research looks at the possible issues around shame and compliance in a developmental - relational based Integrative Psychotherapy. It arose from my experience of shame and compliance in relationship when I noticed how my compliance preserved a pretence of relationship while I was in fact only offering a front to retreat from relationship under disguise of not doing so. The aim of the research is to explore this phenomenon in others to offer a more generalisable description that may help practitioners appreciate better the importance of shame and compliance to their practice. The research comes from a postmodern phenomenological stance and uses the method of transcendental phenomenology, designed around semi-structured interviews to gather in depth qualitative phenomenological data. The findings support other findings about the nature of the felt experience of shame, highlights the importance of relationship and in particular early family to forging shame dynamics within the personality as unconscious RIGs or IWMs, or scripts, and show how shame can trigger compliance and how compliance can trigger shame. Research articles are presented which support the view that shame and compliance are important dynamics in a developmental relational psychotherapy, and the research is used to expand on this theoretically from the