

ABSTRACT

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore the reasons why Gestalt trained therapists seek further training in the Integrative Psychotherapy Model.

The study employs the research design of open interviews applied to five subjects who had training in Gestalt Psychotherapy and continued their professional development to gain a Diploma in Integrative Psychotherapy.

The evidence of the study suggests that Gestalt training is sparse in developmental theory and that a sound developmental theory is imperative in order to work with client issues originating in the early years of their life.

Emergent themes arising in the data incorporate transference and countertransference issues, regression, and the importance of offering appropriate support to balance with challenge; for example, primarily the containment that engenders the freedom to learn and discover for oneself.

It is implicated that the optimum way of working as a therapist involves cognitively understanding these issues and using the therapeutic relationship to offer healthy alternatives to original experience. This is of paramount importance when working with clients with early life traumas.

Phenomenological experience of therapy and training, whether positively or negatively experienced, profoundly influences therapeutic practice.