

Abstract

This dissertation, which employs a case study methodology, focuses on what it means to be a 'touching presence', in the counselling room.

In terms of content; I outline my humanistic and integrative approach, from the outset. This is followed by a description of findings from my literature review, in which I examine touch (and associated) literature, from the perspective of the 'continuum of touch', (Hunter and Struve, 1998; 159). I then offer a case study, demonstrating my 'weaving in' of elements of the 'continuum of touch', into my clinical practice. Reflections on the personal and professional learning, I have gained through this research process, round off the study.

In this dissertation, I propose that there is evidence in touch and developmental literature, to support therapist use of the 'continuum of touch' with clients, in ongoing psychotherapy.

I also consider what might guide therapist use of touch. I come to the conclusion, for my own practice, the extent of my 'touching presence' is best guided by how congruently it sits with a) my client's frame of reference, b) my own and c) the stage of our relationship.