

Abstract

This research study investigated the detoxification process of shame in integrative psychotherapy from the client's perspective of when he or she was in therapy. More specifically, this research investigated the experience of shame and the interventions used in working with toxic shame. Finally, through identifying the detoxification process I aimed to get a sense of what successful therapeutic outcomes reduced shame over time. With a personal and professional interest in shame I sought further exploration into what other people's experience of the shame phenomenon might be like. After reviewing the literature, a method known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyse data of transcripts from semi-structured recorded interviews from a sample of trainee/qualified therapists who had experienced shame as clients. From the findings themes are highlighted that are relative to the research question as well as descriptions from individual experiences of toxic shame and how it is best managed during therapy. Results are set in the context of current literature so as to further enhance the field of integrative psychotherapy in working with clients with toxic shame. Suggested direction for future research in the area of shame is also highlighted.