

Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the therapists' experience of emotional intimacy with their clients. It examined what it really means for the therapist to be involved in a deep, intimate and committed relationship with their clients and how they were impacted by the phenomena psychologically, emotionally and physically. The research was particularly focused on the very moment of intimacy and only the therapists' experience of this. It also explored how the level of contact affected the therapist both personally and professionally; considering what made the emotional intimacy possible. The findings demonstrated that deep emotional contact between therapist and client is well supported within a relational-developmental framework. All participants experienced the phenomena in a very personal way; but predominantly the findings uncovered that emotional intimacy was aided by a shared experience between therapist and client. I feel this research offers invaluable insight into this fascinating and crucial area of psychotherapeutic practice and is relevant to a relational-developmental model of psychotherapy; where the 'contactful' meeting of the other is its central mode of healing.