

Abstract

This dissertation explores love; a paradoxical, active expression that honours an individual's uniqueness, with energetic focus on life and growth, and its role, experience, and impact within a humanistic and integrative therapeutic relationship. Despite being professed throughout time, love is a fearful, elusive topic within psychotherapy, dividing those that embrace or consider it controversial (Charura & Paul, 2015).

Within this dissertation, I include my rationale for practice, describing my philosophical and theoretical integration approach. I follow with a literature review exploring what love is, the Greek terms used to express love, love's role within psychotherapy, and review a framework within which love can be present within the therapeutic relationship. I analyse, critique, and explore literature on love's force on human existence and physiology, briefly exploring the impact of taboo, shame, and culture on love experiences. Finally, I present a client case study, demonstrating how theory informs my practice and how love is an indispensable ingredient, enabling growth and change.

