

Abstract

This dissertation explores attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) through a Humanistic and Integrative lens, drawing on both personal insight and clinical experience. My interest in this subject arose from recognising familiar patterns of emotional withdrawal in my client work and within myself. These experiences prompted a deeper inquiry into how my avoidant attachment processes shape the therapeutic relationship, particularly in moments of distance, disconnection and repair.

The dissertation is structured in three parts: a rationale for practice, a literature review and a clinical case study. The rationale outlines my philosophical and theoretical foundations as a Humanistic and Integrative therapist. The literature review critically examines contemporary attachment theory, with emphasis on the therapist attachment style, emotional regulation and the impact on therapeutic presence. The case study applies these ideas in practice, illustrating how I respond to client defenses, support emotional safety and use the therapeutic relationship to encourage openness and growth.

Engaging with this topic has challenged me to confront aspects of my own attachment process. In doing so, I have come to appreciate how self-awareness and theoretical understanding can strengthen therapeutic contact and foster deeper relational work.