

PT43 Maintain authenticity in the humanistic therapeutic relationship

OVERVIEW

This standard is about how the therapist's authenticity in the therapeutic relationship creates a safe environment where new ways of relating and being can be experienced and explored by the client. The humanistic therapist is expected to be open, honest and non-manipulative; a partner in the relationship not a manager of it. It is essential for the therapist to set aside their own issues so that the therapy is about the client and not them. They are expected to do this even under the pressure of dealing with strong emotions.

This standard describes therapeutic practice adopted successfully in mental health and wellbeing interventions for adults, based on the philosophical tenets of the humanistic tradition and incorporating a range of approaches from a humanistic value base. (See reference in the additional information section on page 3.) To apply this standard, practitioners also need to take account of the multiple problems and complex co-morbidities that individual clients may bring to therapy.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that they are receiving supervision and that their practice reflects up to date information and policies. This standard should be understood in the context of the Digest of National Occupational Standards for Psychological Therapies.

Version No 1

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You will need to know and understand:

Relational processes in the immediate therapeutic relationship

1. the mechanism and nature of shared meanings co-constructed by therapist and client
2. how the therapeutic relationship reflects the relationship histories of both the client and the therapist
3. how the explicit and implicit meanings that shape the client's and therapist's perceptions of their world may be experienced within and influence the therapeutic relationship

4. how the client's explicit, manifest communications may contain an implicit, latent meaning
5. the ways in which aspects of past events can be re-experienced in the present
6. how the therapist may make use of their immediate emotional and embodied reactions to the client
7. the ways in which the therapist's immediate responses and experiences within the therapeutic relationship can form a basis for communicating empathic understanding and informing exploration of the client's subjectivity

Human growth and development and the origins of psychological difficulties

8. models of change, health and wellbeing
9. the impact of conflicts within the individual
10. the impact of social context on psychological growth and development
11. the role that emotional experiencing has in an individual's awareness of how an action contributes to growth
12. the role of relationship in the development of self-experience
13. the mechanisms and effects of internal processes out of the client's awareness in the development of self-experience
14. the role of internal processes out of the client's awareness in difficulties in self-experience
15. how thinking, feeling and behaviour are determined by an individual's subjective reality
16. the impact on psychological development of empathic attunement and acceptance and the extent of its absence during the formative years
17. the mechanism and effects of internalisation of the values, beliefs and attitudes of others
18. the development and benefits of the capacity to reflect on inner processes and experiences
19. the development of the capacity to balance inner and outer realities
20. the multiple dimensions from which human experience can be viewed

Conditions for therapeutic change

21. the rationale for responding empathically to the client and being warm, open, non-judgmental, genuine and transparent
22. how to employ the specific methodology, key concepts and relevant components of the model being used
23. how to maintain therapeutic conditions
24. psychological conditions that make change more likely

Mental health and wellbeing

25. factors associated with the emergence, development and maintenance of mental health difficulties
26. humanistic models of mental distress
27. the ways in which mental health difficulties can impact on personal and interpersonal functioning
28. models of a fully functioning individual

Principles of humanistic therapy

29. philosophy and principles that inform humanistic therapy
30. humanistic theories of therapeutic process
31. approaches to psychological therapy that have grown out of the humanistic psychology movement
32. experiential methods of learning

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

1. be aware of and accept your own experience evoked in the therapeutic process in a non-evaluative manner
2. work on achieving consistency between your experience in the therapeutic process and the way in which you represent it
3. maintain consistency between your verbal and non-verbal communication
4. engage in the therapeutic process at a relational depth that matches the client's level of engagement and tolerance
5. adopt a manner that is non-defensive, respectful and open to the client's suggestions, dissatisfactions and responses
6. disclose your own embodied responses, feelings, thoughts and images evoked in relationship with the client where this is:
 1. relevant to the client's stated concerns and their immediate exploration
 2. persistent or striking
 3. likely to be helpful and constructive with the therapeutic process
7. consider the significance of your responses to the client through self-reflection and supervision

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard is derived from research reported in Roth A D, Hill A and Pilling S (2009) *The competences required to deliver effective Humanistic Psychological Therapies*. Centre for Outcomes Research & Effectiveness (CORE) University College London.

This standard has indicative links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 1 Communication