

PT44 Engage in issues of diversity and difference in humanistic therapy

OVERVIEW

This standard is about the way in which humanistic therapy endorses and works with diversity, difference and the uniqueness of individuals. Therapists respond to the needs of clients whose experiences may be affected by differences such as gender, sexuality, race, age and disability and by experience of oppression and discrimination. Therapists need a high degree of self awareness of their own attitudes, values and prejudices in relation to diversity and difference. They may need to draw on specialist understanding of language, culture and behaviour.

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, therapists 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:

Practice sensitive to diversity and difference

1. societal power structures and how this might impact on the client, the therapist and the therapeutic relationship
2. how oppression and discrimination impacts on an individual's sense of self and sense of self-in-relationship
3. rights and responsibilities in all significant areas of diversity and difference
4. equal opportunities issues as they affect your working environment and practice
5. your own position about culture and identity in relation to issues of diversity and

- discrimination
6. your own cultural blind spots, prejudices and stereotypes and a capacity to transparently discuss these
 7. alternative constructions of identity
 8. how cultures are constructed and construct different world views and experiences of self, family, health, illness and treatment
 9. how to identify cultural themes and explore different meaning and perspectives from within the client's' cultural framework
 10. culture shock and the experience of living in a culture other than one's own
 11. referral sources for possible ongoing support

Conditions for therapeutic change

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

Principles of humanistic therapy

16. philosophy and principles that inform humanistic therapy
17. the humanistic theories of therapeutic process

Human growth and development and the origins of psychological difficulties

18. models of change, health and wellbeing
19. the impact of social context on psychological growth and development
20. how thinking, feeling and behaviour are determined by an individual's subjective reality
21. the impact on psychological development of empathic attunement and acceptance and the extent of its absence during the formative years
22. the mechanism and effects of internalisation of the values, beliefs and attitudes of others
23. the development and benefits of the capacity to reflect on inner processes and experiences
24. the development and capacity to balance inner and outer realities
25. the multiple perspectives from which human experience can be viewed

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

1. learn about and communicate respect, sensitivity and understanding of the client's difference in culture, values, beliefs and attitudes as well as sexuality, gender, race, age or disability
2. in collaboration with the client, ensure sensitivity to diversity and difference in :

1. access to therapy
2. therapeutic style and structures
3. modes of intervention that respect the client's values, beliefs and attitudes
3. explore and challenge your own assumptions, fears and prejudices in working with the client's diversity
4. express awareness and understanding of the possible impact of your different and similar identity on yourself as therapist, on the client and on the relationship
5. maintain an openness to the potential impact of social and cultural difference on you, the client and the therapeutic relationship
6. if relevant to the client's immediate concerns, openly address and acknowledge moments and facets of difference and sameness in the therapeutic relationship
7. if relevant to the client's immediate concerns, discuss with the client the implicit or explicit assumptions that they and you might be making about difference that could be influencing the therapeutic relationship
8. sensitively minimise the power differential in the therapeutic relationship
9. establish and maintain sensitivity in working with different notions of the self
10. recognise the limits of your own competence and expertise and where this has been reached, refer the client to relevant sources of support
11. explore and evaluate your response to the client's difference through supervision and personal therapy

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 6 Equality and diversity