
Abstract

Client authenticity as perceived by psychotherapists

KATO, Midoriko

Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu University

YAMADA, Miho

Institute for Competency Development, Ochanomizu University

Authenticity, the fundamental sense of the true self, is an element that is related to therapeutic transformation during psychotherapy. Through interviews with experienced therapists, this study investigated how clients' authenticity during psychotherapy is perceived by therapists and what phenomenological processes ensue. Using a grounded theory approach for analysis toward theory generation, this study generated categories with clients' self-transformation as an axis. Three conceptual domains were generated: non-authenticity, state authenticity, and trait authenticity. Each domain was divided into categories of the "patterned self," "interacting self," "encountering self," "accumulated self," "integrated self," and "expansive self." It was suggested that starting from the point of non-authenticity, in which the client image is not captured, state authenticity is experienced in the interaction between the therapist and the client, while trait authenticity gradually takes root as stability within the individual client. In addition, therapists did not imagine the client as their original self, but discover "client-ness" by integrating new aspects.

Keywords: authenticity, true self, self-transformation, experienced therapist, therapist interview
