

Abstract

Background: The bachelor thesis is based on the author's interest in the interaction between therapists and clients. Exploring the therapeutic alliance allows us to understand better the interactions in therapy and identify areas that may need improvement. This can lead to better therapeutic practice and improved quality of care for clients. Clients with substance use disorders often face complex issues, including problems in interpersonal relationships. The therapeutic alliance can be a key factor in their treatment.

Aims: The aim of this thesis is to map the working alliance between therapist and client. The research questions focus on identifying different aspects of the alliance from the perspective of the therapist and client, exploring the similarities or differences in their perceptions of the alliance, and assessing what specific aspects of the alliance are subjectively rated as positive or negative.

Methods: A WAI questionnaire supplemented with a semi-structured interview was used for data collection. Both respondents completed the questionnaire twice, six months apart. The data obtained from the questionnaire was then explored through semi-structured interviews, providing a broader context for interpretation. In part, a native interview was also conducted where both client and therapist were allowed to tell their story freely without my intervention. The collected data was then processed and interpreted using the literature.

Results: The thesis reveals the process of forming a therapeutic alliance within the therapeutic relationship between the client Anna and her therapist, which went through different phases and changes. Unconditional acceptance by the therapist emerged as a core theme of the research. The client feels accepted by her therapist, but there are situations where she expects acceptance and does not receive it, which is related to the way the overall goal of therapy. The therapist actively guides the client towards independence and taking care of her own needs. It has been shown that although the theme of unconditional acceptance is considered a very clear part of the therapeutic relationship, it takes different forms and can be more complex in reality.

Conclusion: The thesis shows how therapist and client can move together towards achieving therapeutic goals and overcoming obstacles that may arise during therapy. I believe this work can provide insight into the topic of therapeutic alliance in the treatment of clients with substance use disorder. Although I would like to conclude by noting that every relationship is specific in some way and always depends on individual aspects. Nevertheless, the research provides important insight into the dynamics of the therapeutic alliance and the processes that can take place during psychotherapy between two individuals.

Keywords

working alliance; therapeutic alliance; relationship; therapist; client; aftercare