

Information Sheet

Study Title

Bridging the Gap between the Autistic, the Therapist and the Theoretical Perspective of Autism; An Intersubjective Analysis within a Co-Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology.

Invitation paragraph

'You are being invited to take part in a research study. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. You may ask for help if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information

What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to bridge the gap between the autistic, the therapist and the theoretical perspective of autism, in regards exploring how counselling/psychotherapy has been received or delivered regards emotional mental health and wellbeing. By interviewing a number of adults who have been diagnosed with autism, along with qualified counsellors/psychotherapists associated with a professional body; who have at some stage in their career provided counselling/psychotherapy, the researcher would like to explore the following:

Objectives:

- Explore an autistic's sense of self, other and environment and how these relate when interacting with a therapist. ¹
- Explore differences between the art and science of psychotherapy when working with autism from an autistic, a psychotherapist and a theoretical perspective. ²
- Explore the inner subtleties between psychotherapists when working with clients who are also diagnosed with autism, from both an autistic and psychotherapeutic perspective.

¹ Self in relation to their own development as a child and their insight after becoming adults. The sense of other in relation to family members, friends, school friends, colleagues and the space that exists between how they interact with these people. Sense of environment as in environmental systems that the Autist is connected or disconnected from

² Rueve & Correll (2006) The art of psychotherapy can unfortunately get lost in today's busy psychiatric residencies, amidst all of the genetic, biologic, psychotherapeutic, psychosocial, and educational topics

- Explore how psychotherapists encourage contact with the client who is also autistic within a space that enables the therapist to be invited to step into the world of the client in a non-aggressive way
- Further develop intersubjective analysis within a co-constructivist grounded theory by analysing the reflexive practice as the methodology evolves.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you meet one of the 4 criteria as detailed in the advertisement. A purposive sample leading to a theoretical sample of participants is being used to identify a diverse sample of people.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason”.

What will happen to me if I take part?

- Agree to participate in a 1:1 semi-structured Interview no longer than one hour fifteen minutes; either face to face or through a secure online connection depending on geographical position of participants to the researcher. Interviews are to be recorded so that the interview can be analysed. Please see the consent form for details regards this.
- Sign the consent form after reading the information sheet and ethical implications; and post/mail the consent form back to the researcher prior to beginning the semi-structured interview.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

For those who may become distressed about discussing their psychotherapeutic work, the participant may make use of the following BACP Senior Accredited online counsellor. Online counselling has been chosen due to participants coming from varied geographical locations around the world.

The participant may go to the following National Autism Society (NAS) website and put in their postcode to find a counsellor/psychotherapist who has been approved by the NAS.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/strategies-and-approaches/counsellors-and-psychotherapists.aspx>

What are the possible benefits for taking part?

I have provided a list of these under the following link. However here are some of the most valid possible benefits.

This research may assist in:

- further developing insight as to how to manage the therapeutic process when working with individual clients who also are autistic.
- identifying common obstacles that effect the development of the therapeutic process when working with individual clients who also are autistic
- bridging some of the gaps between existing models of therapy and how they are implemented when working with individual clients who also are autistic.
- encouraging a greater emphasis on joined up services between ASD teams and psychotherapists/counsellors.
- helping in the development of broad outcomes that could facilitate in providing evidence in the assessment of services when working therapeutically with individual clients who also are autistic.
- acting as a catalyst in the development of psychotherapeutic intervention for individual clients who also are autistic as a specialised subject within the educational and professional arena.

Will my taking part in this study be confidential?

'All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you which is used will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised from it or any other identifying information.'

No participant will be identified in the use of the data and different identification initials will be assigned to each participant for the researcher's convenience.

No schools will be named or geographical locations identified. If participants feel any information offered is very sensitive – they reserve the right to amend or withdraw it post the interview.

Participants will not be identified to other participants and will be interviewed on their own at a location that suits them and the researcher or via phone or online through a secure software package.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

Below is a list of possible opportunities how the results of this study may transform relational practices of therapy/counselling.:

Conferences and workshops

- To assist in main study for development of theoretical framework when working therapeutically with clients who also have a diagnosis of autism.
- Co-constructivist Grounded Theory.

Journal article publications in counselling, autism specific, and research journals.³

³ Examples of journals to include Counselling Psychotherapy and Research; British Journal of Guidance & Counselling; Therapy Today; Journal on Developmental Disabilities; Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders; Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders; Grounded Theory Review, an International Journal.

Assist in development of Professional Development training programme.

Part of potential publication of a book/chapter of book/how to guide in the following:

- Theory development in working with clients who are autistic or on the autistic spectrum
- Co-constructive Grounded Theory

Exploration of developing outcomes measures to be used pre/post therapy to help measure the a client's experience of therapy in a more accurate way.

Who has reviewed the study?

Metanoia Research Ethics Committee
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