

## SFHPT43

# 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 5). 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.

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#### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

- P1 be aware of and accept your own experience evoked in the therapeutic process in a non-evaluative manner
- P2 work on achieving consistency between your experience in the therapeutic process and the way in which you represent it
- P3 maintain consistency between your verbal and non-verbal communication
- P4 engage in the therapeutic process at a relational depth that matches the client's level of engagement and tolerance
- P5 adopt a manner that is non-defensive, respectful and open to the client's suggestions, dissatisfactions and responses
- P6 disclose your own embodied responses, feelings, thoughts and images evoked in relationship with the client where this is:
  - P6.1 relevant to the client's stated concerns and their immediate exploration
  - P6.2 persistent or striking
  - P6.3 likely to be helpful and constructive with the therapeutic process
- P7 consider the significance of your responses to the client through self-reflection and supervision

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#### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

#### Relational processes in the immediate therapeutic relationship

- K1 the mechanism and nature of shared meanings co-constructed by therapist and client
- K2 how the therapeutic relationship reflects the relationship histories of both the client and the therapist
- K3 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
- K4 how the client's explicit, manifest communications may contain an implicit, latent meaning
- K5 the ways in which aspects of past events can be re-experienced in the present
- K6 how the therapist may make use of their immediate emotional and embodied reactions to the client
- K7 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

*You need to know and understand:*

- K8 models of change, health and wellbeing
- K9 the impact of conflicts within the individual
- K10 the impact of social context on psychological growth and development
- K11 the role that emotional experiencing has in an individual's awareness of how an action contributes to growth
- K12 the role of relationship in the development of self-experience
- K13 the mechanisms and effects of internal processes out of the client's awareness in the development of self-experience
- K14 the role of internal processes out of the client's awareness in difficulties in self-experience
- K15 how thinking, feeling and behaviour are determined by an individual's subjective reality
- K16 the impact on psychological development of empathic attunement and acceptance and the extent of its absence during the formative years
- K17 the mechanism and effects of internalisation of the values, beliefs and attitudes of others
- K18 the development and benefits of the capacity to reflect on inner processes and experiences
- K19 the development of the capacity to balance inner and outer realities
- K20 the multiple dimensions from which human experience can be viewed

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#### Conditions for therapeutic change

*You need to know and understand:*

- K21 the rationale for responding empathically to the client and being warm, open, non-judgmental, genuine and transparent
- K22 how to employ the specific methodology, key concepts and relevant components of the model being used
- K23 how to maintain therapeutic conditions
- K24 psychological conditions that make change more likely

#### Mental health and wellbeing

*You need to know and understand:*

- K25 factors associated with the emergence, development and maintenance of mental health difficulties
- K26 humanistic models of mental distress
- K27 the ways in which mental health difficulties can impact on personal and interpersonal functioning
- K28 models of a fully functioning individual

#### Principles of humanistic therapy

*You need to know and understand:*

- K29 philosophy and principles that inform humanistic therapy
- K30 humanistic theories of therapeutic process
- K31 approaches to psychological therapy that have grown out of the humanistic psychology movement
- K32 experiential methods of learning

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#### Additional Information

##### External links

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):

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