

Ability to establish and manage the therapeutic frame and boundaries

Knowledge

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| An ability to draw on knowledge that the therapist's boundaries and those of the therapeutic frame will have an idiosyncratic meaning for the client and that this will inform how the client experiences the frame and any changes to it. |
| An ability to draw on knowledge that the physical setting of the therapy room is invested with an affective charge that is linked to the relationship with the therapist |
| Knowledge that planned and unplanned interruptions in the treatment may impact on the client and that this requires acknowledgement and understanding when it occurs: |
| knowledge of the dynamics of separation, loss and mourning as the basis for understanding the client's subjective experience of breaks during the treatment |

Application

Ability to establish and maintain a consistent therapeutic frame

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| An ability to establish clear parameters within which the treatment will take place (setting; frequency and length of sessions; use of the couch where applicable; limits of confidentiality; expectations of the client [e.g. that they will say what comes to mind/bring dreams etc]; arrangements/cover over breaks) |
| An ability to maintain consistency in relation to the agreed parameters and therapeutic stance so as to create a stable and secure setting for the client through: |
| maintaining the therapist's analytic attitude |
| being alert to the meaning to the client of any changes to the agreed setting, whether planned or unplanned |
| helping the client to explore their experience of any changes |
| attending to and interpreting the therapist's understanding of the client's experience of separations/discontinuities in the treatment frame |
| An ability to be receptive to the client's conscious and unconscious experience of the setting and its boundaries and to help the client to articulate this experience so as to: |
| ensure that the client's agreement to the therapy and its boundaries is rooted in an exploration of their conscious and unconscious feelings and fantasies about the therapy |
| identify early transference patterns that will form the basis for eventual interpretations |

Ability to manage deviations from the established therapeutic frame

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| An ability to evaluate the meaning of the client's requests for modifications to the parameters of the therapy as the basis for responding to such requests |
| An ability to help the client explore unverballed feelings and unconscious conflicts to counter the pressure to act out and so protect the viability of the therapy |
| An ability to maintain (or regain) a reflective stance when managing forms of acting out in relation to the setting (by the client, therapist or both) |
| An ability to set clear limits where necessary (e.g. if the client's behaviour undermines the viability of the treatment) |

Ability to manage interruptions in the treatment

An ability to prepare the client for planned interruptions (e.g. holiday breaks) in the treatment by helping them explore their conscious and unconscious responses to breaks

An ability to assess risk during breaks in the treatment and to make arrangements for additional support when required