

Colliding worlds¹: Brief dynamic therapy from a self psychology perspective

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Private practice

Abstract

This first-person, narrative account details a struggle encountered in clinical practice in which it became evident that what many patients expected from therapy differed from what the therapist believed would be helpful. These colliding worlds of expectations and assumptions of what is curative created an impetus for the therapist to revisit and re-examine her established and cherished ideals drawn from the psychoanalytic theory of self psychology, in light of the particular economic and sociocultural context that she was encountering in her private practice. The pragmatic outcome of this reflective process included ideas around the adaptation and application of self psychology theoretical constructs within a time-limited framework, in order to find ways to reach a more diverse client set. The ideas put forward are illustrated with case material.

¹ My title is partly drawn from chapter 4 in *Practicing Intersubjectively* by Peter Buirski (2005).