

**Doctorate in Psychotherapy by Professional Studies (DPsych)
Metanoia Institute/Middlesex University**

***Building Bridges: Introducing Concepts from Neuroscience and Attachment
Theory to Person-Centred Practitioners***

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Abstract

This project focuses on the bringing together of two very different professional perspectives in the field of psychotherapy, that of the Person-Centred approach and that of Affective Neuroscience and Attachment Theory. The project tackles the challenge of interfacing different knowledge areas that potentially reflect different epistemologies and practice-based pursuits. It is argued that this is an important issue that relates to the relative positioning and competition between different 'modalities' in the field of psychotherapy.

The project centres on the development of a series of workshops that bring together the two areas referred to above in the context of a learner centred approach to education and the potential application and integration of professional knowledge. The content of the workshops covered a number of specific areas of knowledge from the fields of Neuroscience and Attachment; this knowledge is critically reviewed and set out in some detail, followed by an in-depth description of the workshop design.

The thesis outlines results from the pedagogical evaluations of the workshops using Thematic Analysis of questionnaire data, as well as the analysis of in-depth interviews with four workshop participants using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Evaluation of the workshops yielded three key superordinate themes: Curiosity and recognition of multiple ways of knowing; Collaborative process on a range of concepts and ideas; Personal and theoretical reflections. Analysis of the in-depth interviews yielded four key superordinate themes: Impact on practice; Tensions of potential integration; Changes in personal understanding; Workshop scaffolding as a resource.

The themes derived from both of these analyses are the subject of a final discussion and critical overview that highlight some of the complexities of bringing different types of knowledge together in a form that is accessible and useful to practitioners of psychotherapy. There is also an emphasis on the need for an awareness of the related challenges in single modality trainings in terms of the ultimate service to clients.