

Influence of Resilience and Personal Meaning on Vicarious Traumatization in Psychotherapists

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ABSTRACT

The study examines influence of resilience and personal meaning on vicarious traumatization in psychotherapists, as well as the relationship between psychotherapist's experience in therapy and therapist experience of effectiveness in therapy.

Sample was consisted of 70 trauma psychotherapists from Europe, holding EAP Certificate for Psychotherapy. Participants were asked to complete Adversity Response Profile (Stoltz, 2000), Personal Meaning Profile (Wong, 1998), Trauma and Attachment Belief Scale, Pearlman, 2003) and Basic Data Questionnaire (Zeleskov-Djoric, 2006).

Results indicate that negative correlation exist between resilience (measured like AQ) and vicarious traumatization ($r = -.375$, $p < 0.01$) and between personal meaning and vicarious traumatization ($r = -.470$, $p < 0.01$). Dimensions of AQ which are the best predictors of vicarious traumatization are Control and Ownership. Dimensions of Personal Meaning which are the best predictors of vicarious traumatization are Relationship, Self-transcendence and Self-acceptance. At the end, results indicate that negative correlation exists between vicarious traumatization and therapist experience of effectiveness in therapy. Psychotherapists who experience themselves effective in therapy have lower vicarious traumatization.

These findings are important because AQ and its dimensions didn't use in psychotherapy research until this study, especially as a factors that could be predictive for vicarious traumatization. Based on the results of this study, it appears that the AQ model may provide a good explanation of factors contribute to disturbance of cognitive schemas in vicarious traumatization in psychotherapists.