
Abstract

Survival of a therapist who was perceived as dead

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This article examines the meaning of a therapist's survival through a psychotherapy-based case study with a student diagnosed with high-functioning autism as an adolescent. When considering psychological support strategies for people with autism, remedial and educational approaches based on behavioral or learning theories often take precedence over psychotherapy-based psychological interactions due to skepticism regarding the latter's therapeutic effects. This case study confirmed the autism spectrum disorder client's emotional growth by meeting them in their internal world of specific senses with no one else to turn to, while ensuring to avoid excessive stimulation. By assuming that the therapist was dead and unable to express their emotions, the client could grasp their sense of life and attempt to contact the outside world. This study explored the effects of a psychotherapy technique for clients with autism who feel the outside world is too invasive, in which the therapist provides safety to serve as a psychological skin, interacts with the client's undifferentiated self, and survives as someone with whom the client can share actuality.

Keywords: autism spectrum disorder, psychotherapy, psychological skin, survival
