

**EABP Science and Research Symposium
at the 14th European and 10th International Congress
of Body Psychotherapy:
The Body in Relationship: Self—Other—Society
Nancy Eichhorn, PhD**

The second EABP Science and Research Symposium provided a forum to discuss recent research, networking opportunities, and publishing options for body psychotherapists and researchers. The framework, formed during the Australian Congress four years ago, initiated the first symposium held at the 2012 Cambridge Congress. The Lisbon symposium stimulated the necessary conversation and collaboration to advance research in body psychotherapy and its clinical application. The 90-minute symposium comprised three segments: current research studies dealing with isolation, loneliness, and chronic depression; the EABP collaborative practice research network and writing clinical case studies; and updates in the field.

A Closer Look at Extreme Loneliness: Theory, Effects, and Possible Treatments

Extreme loneliness was defined as a distressing feeling in conjunction with the perception that the quality of one's social relationships is lacking—it is not the same as social isolation. It was noted that 15% to 30% of people living in the United States of America live with extreme loneliness and that related health issues run the gamut from physical concerns such as heart disease, sleep loss, and increased mortality to mental/emotional concerns such as depression, anxiety, and diminished self-esteem. Treatment approaches need to target enhanced social skills, social support, and social opportunity. According to body psychotherapist Maurizio Stupiggia, Vice President, Italian Association for Body Psychotherapy, people living with extreme loneliness have lost their connection to their body and therapists need to use the body in a special way to bring about recovery.

EABP Collaborative Practice Research Network and New Research Perspectives

Body psychotherapists/researchers/writers discussed means to gather data, connect with training institutions to create an effective research structure, and support research while maintaining a clinical practice. Michael Heller, PhD, author of *Body Psychotherapy: History, Concepts and Methods*, said that networking was necessary in order to ascertain who is working with body psychotherapy practices around certain pathologies (i.e., anxiety, depression) and to promote the use of body psychotherapy practices within the general clinical world. Discussions occurring on LinkedIn, i.e., Somatic Perspectives on Psychotherapy were mentioned as ways to network. Lidy Evertsen, EABP president, suggested inviting EABP members to share their written cases with a network of colleagues for response and reminding authors to reference their own theoretical background in case study presentations.

The reality that many clinicians are not trained in nor interested in conducting research was explored. Options to resolve this issue included creating a new agenda for research and supporting therapists to connect with researchers. Jennifer Tantia, USABP Research Committee chair, supported the idea of collaboration suggesting that if practitioners are going to contact researchers, they need to learn how to speak the language of research, and read their studies before contacting them to propose a potential liaison. Jill van der Aa, EABP General Secretary and Vice-President, reminded the audience that EABP policy has always been to connect professionals and enable collaboration.

Efficacy study: An exploratory randomized controlled trial of body psychotherapy for patients with chronic depression

According to Frank Röhrich, MD, FRCPSych, “We [body psychotherapists] are making ground when we are accepted in medical journals.” His current research study, “An exploratory randomized controlled trial of body psychotherapy for patients with chronic depression”, involving patients with chronic major depressive disorder and dysthymia, was published in the *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 155(1), 2013. In this study, Röhrich, Papadopoulos, and Priebe conducted a meta-analysis of the literature on major depressive disorder and a randomized, mixed-method clinical trial utilizing a manualized body psychotherapy model in a group therapy setting. Eight participants received 20 intervention sessions (90 minutes each) for 10 weeks. Outcome data showed a significant reduction in the treatment group: improved breathing patterns, improved mood, less pain, shifts in physical posture and gait. The next step is to obtain grant funding for a larger study.

The case study approach: An open invitation to case study research

Shelia Butler, EABP collaborative practice research network organizer, engaged the audience in an experiential exploration of case studies. She shared pictures of an unkempt man whose 20-year residence, noted as his ‘island’, was a cardboard box. He came to therapy of his own free will. She asked the audience to consider how they would approach a therapeutic relationship. Responses varied from “I would assume it would be difficult to reach him through interactions,” to “I wouldn’t assume our work would take place in my office. I would join him some place under a tree, meet on his ground.”

Butler used the experience to invite therapists to write case studies based on clients who stand out, whose story is uniquely their own. Therapists, she said, can explain and/or advance methodology by understanding and writing about the complexity of the therapeutic encounter. Butler then discussed different types of case studies and the need to develop a framework for writing about them. Courtenay Young added that a ‘how-to’ article for case study writing is available on the EABP website.

Training and Research opportunities

The Wilhelm Reich Foundation was briefly described; the foundation funds research studies designed to inform the world about body psychotherapy work. Those interested can contact Joop Valstar from the EABP.

Herbert Grassmann, Chair EABP Science and Research Committee, and Stefan Bischof, EABP Forum Executive Committee, addressed critical thinking skills in training programs, generating a student thesis data base, ways to improve research quality, and academic writing in the body psychotherapy field.

Jennifer Tantia overviewed the science and research situation in the US. According to Tantia, five graduate programs exist offering body psychotherapy degrees: three at the master’s level and two at the doctorate. As a research advisor to several student doctoral students, Tantia shared that students investigate body psychotherapy topics, but their dissertations are based in fields adjunct to body psychotherapy, i.e. social work, physical education, sociology, etc. Her current goal is to implement alliances between psychotherapists and researchers resulting in collaborative research for body psychotherapists.

Closure

The room pulsed as ideas floated from the stage out to the audience and returned with additions, modifications. Science and research, potentially fearful topics for the uninitiated,

the untrained, were honored during this session as presenters and audience members alike exuded a trust and a knowing. The organization worked well with a different moderator representing each segment and different presenters offering their piece yet all remained on stage and contributed throughout. The overarching theme of loneliness (and isolation provided a focal point for presentations creating continuity as well. I appreciated the audience participation and the respectful tones as ideas were offered without challenge or criticism; it was an open forum with space for everyone's voice. And when one panel member did challenge another regarding his stance on body psychotherapy versus dance and movement therapy, the moderator handled the tension with a compassionate and honest response: yes, this is important but not right now. The controversy was set aside to be discussed at another time.

I have never attended a science and research symposium so I came with no preconceptions. I left with information to join the collaborative, access to a template to write an academic case study, concepts addressing quality research, and new contacts for networking. Considering the ramifications of all the topics offered, more time and perhaps pull-out groups might have been considered. The first annual symposium (2012) was a daylong event held Post-Congress in Cambridge. Perhaps the third annual symposium can also be a daylong event within the parameters of the actual Congress so more participants can attend.

The third annual science and research symposium will be given at the next EABP Congress in Athens, Greece, 13-16th October 2016.

REFERENCES

- Heller, M. C. (2012). *Body psychotherapy: History, concepts, methods*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Röhrich, F., Papadopoulos, N., Priebe, S. (2013). An exploratory randomized controlled trial of body psychotherapy for patients with chronic depression involved patients with chronic major depressive disorder and dysthymia. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 155(1).

WRITING ABOUT BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY

An invitation to write for us, with us, with support along the way. Your writing can contribute to and enrich the 'body' of critical and reflective content, as well as to the clinical expertise, in the 'field' of body psychotherapy.

Whom can you write for?

We suggest that – for a professional article – you consider:

The EABP/USABP peer-reviewed **International Body Psychotherapy Journal** (for original work only): www.ibpj.org

The peer-reviewed journal of Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy (for original work only): www.tandfonline.com/toc/tbmd20/current#.VBfpFS6wJRU

Or: (for German language authors) **körper – tanz – bewegung**; Zeitschrift für Körperpsychotherapie und Kreativtherapie: www.reinhardt-verlag.de/de/zeitschrift/51830

(You will find the necessary “instructions for authors” on their various websites.)

Or: for something a bit more conversational: **Somatic Psychotherapy Today**:

<https://www.SomaticPsychotherapyToday.com>

Or: Something for a newsletter of your particular professional association, modality association, or national association in psychotherapy;

Or: A comment or a thread in one of the **Somatic Perspectives LinkedIn** group discussions, facilitated by Serge Prengel: www.linkedin.com/somaticperspectives.com

Or: Possibly, a chapter for an edited book, on a particular theme, possibly like one of the series being published by Body Psychotherapy Publications (**BPP**):

www.bodypsychotherapypublications.com.

Or: Something to be published somewhere else, at some other time, in a different medium; or for a personal internet blog; or . . . maybe just for your personal journal.

What can you write about?

You can write about attending a recent Congress, or seminar, or about attending a different event; - or about your student thesis; - or your experience of writing your student thesis; - or a special or particularly interesting case history; - or an aspect of your personal therapy; - or about working with a particular client group; - or about a development of theory or practice; or - even about your reflections on the field of Body Psychotherapy.

How to get started writing professionally?

There is an article in the journal of Body, Movement & Dance in Psychotherapy www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17432979.2010.530060#.VBfsNC6wJRU (You can also find a free copy here.)

And there are some recent guidelines about how to write a professional Body Psychotherapy Case Study: www.eabp.org/researchcase-study-guidelines.php. There are also many articles on the Internet (in different languages) about how to write.

If you want any further assistance with where to publish, or with the process of editing, or re-editing, or with the complications of the publication process, the following people may be able to offer you some help.

They are all professional body psychotherapists, editors and writers:

Nancy Eichhorn: Nancy@NancyEichhorn.com

Jacqueline Carleton: jacarletonphd@gmail.com

Gill Westland: gillwestland@cbpc.org.uk

Jennifer Tantia: JFTantia@gmail.com

Courtenay Young: courtenay@courtenay-young.com

Sincerely,

EABP Publications Committee

<http://www.eabp.org/publications.php>

Squaring the Circle: Bridging the Gap Between Research and Practice About the EABP Collaborative Practice Research Network (CPRN)

The awareness of the importance of fostering different models of research, particularly those linked more closely to the actual practice of body psychotherapy and those encouraging a two-way communication between researchers and practitioners, has led to the creation of the EABP Collaborative Practice Research Network.

This is an exciting new initiative to provide a forum for dialogue, debate and the development of innovative and creative research methods and projects that assist clinical practice and help body psychotherapy (and/or somatic psychology) to develop an empirical underpinning of its professional practice.

The aim is to broaden knowledge of the field of body psychotherapy through communities of practice and clinical research. It explores how a CPRN can transform perceptions of psychotherapy research and practice, strengthen connections between members, and encourage continuous development and co-creation among participants. This important initiative is an opportunity to make a significant difference within our profession and to develop – together – the foundations of both scientific and clinical practice research.

Specifically, we are planning to explore and develop, at local and international levels, a variety of strategies to support practitioners' research and look at what types of research potentially provide a broadening of our understanding and practice of psychotherapy, and how various types of research advance, improve and extend our knowledge of body psychotherapy. We will do this by bringing together practitioners and researchers from around the world, both online and face-to-face, to discuss ways of bridging the gap between clinical practice and research.

The committee has organized two symposiums in conjunction with the 2012 and 2014 EABP Congresses. The next symposium will be held during the 15th European Congress of Body Psychotherapy in Athens Greece, 13-16th October 2016.

We would like to invite you to join us and become part of this exciting and innovative initiative. If you are interested please contact Sheila Butler and Herbert Grassmann - cprn@eabp.org

EABP Science and Research Committee - Sheila Butler, Herbert Grassmann (chairperson), Frank Röhrich, Maurizio Stupiggia, Joop Valstar, Courtenay Young and Jennifer Tantia www.eabp.org/research-scientific-committee.php

Strengthening links between practitioners and researchers at every stage of the process

News:

The Society for Psychotherapy Research (SPR), an association devoted to the development and dissemination of research on psychotherapy has some exciting upcoming SPR events:

- *The International Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, USA* in June 2015 from 24th to 27th June.
- *The European Conference on Psychotherapy Research* in Klagenfurt, Austria, September 24th to 27th, 2015, and the planned 2016 International Meeting in Jerusalem, Israel in June 2016.

You might also like to browse the Psychotherapy Research Journal pages, especially the Special Issues and the online resources; there is a lot of information on the integration of theoretical, empirical and clinical knowledge in psychotherapy. See <http://www.psychotherapyresearch.org>

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THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SOMATIC PRAXIS

INCORPORATING US ASSOCIATION FOR BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY JOURNAL

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RESEARCH ISSUE

Guest Editor: Jennifer F. Tantia, PhD, BC-DMT

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B O D Y -
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