

The Relationship between the Psychotherapist's Years of Clinical Experience and Behavior and Attitude during Therapy

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Abstract: In this study, a survey was conducted to investigate the effects of the length of psychotherapists' clinical experience on their behavior and attitude during psychotherapy.

In the first analysis, 212 psychotherapists were divided into four groups based on the length of their clinical experience (less than 5 years/6~10 years/11~15 years/more than 16 years). The main findings were as follows; (1) Therapists with greater experience tended to use a greater number of techniques than therapists with less experience. (2) Many psychotherapists with less clinical experience are inclined to use eclectic psychotherapy.

In the second analysis, 122 psychotherapists were divided into eight groups according to their length of clinical experience (less than 10 years/more than 11 years) and the technique they used (eclectic psychotherapy/behavior therapy/client-centered therapy/psychoanalytic therapy). The results were as follows; (1) Therapists with a large amount of work experience showed the same behavior and attitudes about "flexibility of therapeutic relationship", even if they used different techniques; (2) There was no evidence that the difference between techniques becomes greater in therapists with a large amount of experience than in therapists with a small amount of experience.

Key words: psychotherapy in Japan, therapeutic technique, the number of years in clinical experience