

# — ABSTRACTS —

Society for Psychotherapy Research

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### **Negative effects of psychotherapy**

Adverse and unwanted effects of psychotherapy remain an under-researched area to this day. Yet, to understand the psychotherapy process in its complexity and to reduce the level of deterioration, it is necessary to investigate these phenomena systematically. This panel consists of four studies that address this issue from multiple perspectives. Three of them investigate negative effects using multiple samples (some of them large-scale) from different countries, addressing the problem from both the clients' and the therapists' perspective. The authors strive to explore how often these effects occur in practice and how they are related to outcome. The last one – a single-case study of a client who completed a series of treatments and reported many negative effects – brings us a deeper insight into the role that a client and a therapist can play in the co-creation of these negative effects.

**Client's complaints after seeing five psychotherapists: A case study.** *Zbyněk Vybíral, Masaryk University; Luboš Chvála, Masaryk University*

We will briefly describe a unique case of Mr. L who saw five therapists with whom he has attended eight psychological treatments altogether. A series of in-depth interviews were conducted to explore his copious negative experiences and complaints. The data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The results offer an insight into how these negative effects echo the patient's basic issues that brought him to psychotherapy, resonating with Arkowitz and Lilienfeld's thought that "people who seek psychotherapy for conditions that cause them serious distress often thwart the very help they seek." However, we strived to carefully analyze how both the patient and his therapists could have contributed to the development of these negative experiences and ponder some implications for the therapeutic practice.

**Discussants:** Louis Castonguay, Penn State University, University Park, USA;

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