

# Therapy for the Therapists

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I must share with you a delicious piece of information which has just come to my notice. Someone did a fair-sized and quite respectable survey of all the clinical psychologists working in the NHS, altogether contacting a sample of 321 of them. Among other things, they were asked about their own orientation as therapists, and whether they themselves went to a therapist, and if so what was the orientation of that therapist.

For their own orientations, 41% were cognitive-behavioural, 39% eclectic, 14% psychodynamic, and 6% others (gestalt, TA, person-centred or group).

The proportion of the sample who had had personal therapy was 41%. As for their therapists' orientations, 64% were psychodynamic, other 20%, eclectic 14% and cognitive-behavioural 2%. Looking just at the biggest group, the cognitive-behavioural psychologists, 44% chose psychodynamic, 22% eclectic, 22% other

and 11% cognitive-behavioural therapists. Of the other orientations, not one psychologist chose a cognitive-behavioural therapist for their own therapy. Of the psychodynamic people, 85% went to their own.

I think this is fascinating. It has long been a conviction of mine that cognitive-behavioural therapists did not go to people of that persuasion for their own therapy. What is good enough for their clients is not, apparently, good enough for themselves. The biggest single group of them went to analytical therapists: and the same is true of the eclectic practitioners, 62% of whom went to psychodynamic therapists.

On the other hand, those in the 'other' category, which I suppose would include most of the humanistic people, went mainly to their own — 63% went to therapists with that same label. I was glad about that.

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Jurai Darongkamas, Mary V Burton and Delia Cushway, 'The use of personal therapy by clinical psychologists working in the NHS in the United Kingdom' *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy* 1/3 pp.165-173, 1994