

**Person-centred counsellors and psychotherapists experiences of working with clients who have experienced religious or spiritual struggle after trauma.**

**Rachel O’Hanlon**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. This information sheet aims to help you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the leaflet carefully and contact me if you would like any more information about the study, if you have any questions, or if you would like to take part.

**What is the project about?**

The focus of this study is to explore person-centred counsellors and psychotherapists experiences of working with clients who have experienced religious or spiritual struggle after trauma. The study seeks to gain a better understanding of this experience.

**What are the aims of the research?**

The research project has three broad aims:

1. To gain a better understanding of the lived experience of counsellors and psychotherapists who have worked with clients who have experienced religious or spiritual struggle after trauma
2. To gain a better understanding of how counsellors and psychotherapists make sense, or make meaning out of their experience of working with clients who have experienced religious or spiritual struggle after trauma
3. To explore how counsellors and psychotherapists can work effectively with clients who have experienced religious or spiritual struggle after trauma

**What sorts of methods are being used?**

If you decide to take part in the study, you will be invited to a one-to-one interview (via Microsoft Teams), during which you will be asked a series of open questions on the research topic.

**Why have you been chosen?**

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a person-centred counsellor and/or psychotherapist. The study aims to include participants from all cultural backgrounds, including participants from previously unrepresented groups, to increase inclusivity and cross-cultural representation. To take part, you will need to be a (self-identified) person-centred counsellor and/or psychotherapist, who is currently in practice, who is registered or accredited with a professional body, and who has worked with a client or clients who have experienced religious or spiritual struggle after trauma.

**What are you being asked to do?**

You are being asked to participate in a one-to-one interview, via Microsoft Teams, which will last for approximately one hour. The discussion will be audio and video recorded.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

Personal data will be processed under UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data collected will be treated confidentially, and stored electronically in the secure, password protected University of Nottingham OneDrive and Stream, and will only be accessible by the Research Lead and Research Supervisor. Interview data and transcripts will be anonymised, with codes allocated to them. Identifiable information such as your name and contact details will be kept separately in a secure and confidential location. The final research paper may include word-for-word parts of the interview, but this will be anonymised and will not include any information that identifies you or any organisation that you work for. Raw data will be destroyed after the complete for my studies, within one year after data collection. The research will be undertaken in accordance with to The University of Nottingham Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics (2023) and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (BACP, 2018) and Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions (BACP, 2019).

**What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results of this research study will form the basis of my final dissertation, for the award of MA Trauma Informed Practice at the University of Nottingham. It is also possible that it will be published in a relevant professional journal, or used for training, workshop, or conference purposes.

**Do you have to take part?**

Taking part is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you may decline to answer any questions during the one-to-one interview. You may also withdraw your consent and participation at any stage of the research process, until 1st October 2024, without giving a reason. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to read and sign a consent form. You will be given time to read the consent form in advance of the interview, and ask any questions about the process, before signing the form.

**What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?**

The interview will take approximately one hour to complete, which for some people may be difficult to arrange. Reflecting on your client work in this way might cause distress or feel professionally challenging. Whilst it is anticipated there is little risk in taking part in this research study, themes may arise for which you may wish to seek additional support.

**What are the possible benefits to me of taking part?**

Participating in this research study is likely to benefit the wider counselling and psychotherapy community, through a greater knowledge and understanding of the experiences of therapists working with religious or spiritual struggle after trauma. It may lead to further research, address a gap in knowledge around how therapists can work effectively with this client group, and lead to the development of practice guidance or training. Participation may also benefit you personally, as you explore and reflect on your work with this client group.

**Who is paying for this research and who is carrying it out?**

This research is unfunded and is being undertaken as part of my dissertation for the award of MA Trauma Informed Practice at the University of Nottingham. The research has received ethical approval from the University of Nottingham and will be supervised by Dr Gary Winship. If you are interested in taking part in this study, or would like more information, please contact me (Rachel O’Hanlon) by email.

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If you have any concerns about the research, please contact Rachel O’Hanlon or Gary Winship by email. You can also raise issues with the School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator for Taught Courses: educationtaughtcourseethics@nottingham.ac.uk