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**Evaluating the Effects of Self-Practice/Self-Reflection on Cognitive Flexibility,  
Empathy, Insight, Self-Compassion, Self-Monitoring, and Stress in Postgraduate  
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Trainees**

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## Abstract

There is considerable evidence to suggest that cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) training programs can effectively enhance therapists' CBT knowledge and skills. In response, research is now beginning to establish which specific training strategies are most effective in developing which CBT skills and competencies. Self-practice/self-reflection (SP/SR) is an experiential training strategy used to enhance CBT training and the ongoing professional development of CBT practitioners. Self-practice/self-reflection provides therapists with a structured experience of using CBT on themselves (self-practice) and reflecting on that experience (self-reflection). In order to build on previous SP/SR research, the aim of the current study was to explore the effects of SP/SR on six specific dimensions of CBT therapist competence: cognitive flexibility, empathy, insight, self-compassion, self-monitoring, and stress, among postgraduate CBT trainees. Seven students completing a SP/SR program as part of the Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy at Massey University were recruited to participate in the study. Quantitative data using six self-report measures of therapist competence was collected at five critical time points pertaining to the participants' SP/SR program: baseline, pre-intervention, midpoint, post-intervention, and follow-up. Qualitative data was collected from participants' written reflections. A mixed method design using descriptive quantitative and qualitative thematic analysis provided valuable quantitative (and some qualitative) support for the use of SP/SR as a CBT training and development strategy, particularly when targeting these six dimensions of CBT therapist competence.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter One: Introduction.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Overview.....	12
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection.....	13
Declarative-Procedural-Reflective Model of Therapist Skill Development.....	15
Experiencing CBT from the Inside Out: A Self-Practice/Self-Reflection Workbook for Therapists.....	16
Background.....	16
Workbook overview.....	17
Ways of being model.....	18
Supporting evidence.....	18
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Therapist Development.....	20
Trainee therapist development.....	20
Experienced therapist development.....	22
Case conceptualisation.....	23

Empathic skill development.....	24
Therapist self-care.....	24
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection Research Limitations.....	25
Summary.....	26
Current Research Aims and Rationale.....	27
<b>Chapter Two: Method.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Overview.....	29
Participants.....	29
Measures.....	30
Quantitative measures.....	30
Qualitative measures.....	34
Research Design.....	36
Procedure.....	37
Ethics.....	37
Data collection.....	37
Data analysis.....	39
<b>Chapter Three: Results.....</b>	<b>40</b>
Overview.....	40
Quantitative Descriptive Analysis.....	40
Adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v3.0.....	40

Adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale.....	42
Cognitive Flexibility Inventory.....	43
Perceived Stress Scale.....	45
Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form.....	47
Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....	50
Individual case study: Participant 1.....	51
Individual case study: Participant 2.....	52
Individual case study: Participant 3.....	53
Individual case study: Participant 4.....	54
Individual case study: Participant 5.....	55
Individual case study: Participant 6.....	56
Individual case study: Participant 7.....	58
Qualitative Thematic Analysis.....	59
Theme 1: Enhanced empathy.....	59
Theme 2: The importance of collaboration.....	60
Theme 3: The development of helpful tools to address problems.....	60
Theme 4: Time constraints as a potential barrier.....	61
Theme 5: Positive impact on personal and professional development.....	62
Summary.....	63
<b>Chapter Four: Discussion.....</b>	<b>65</b>

Overview.....	65
Summary of Findings.....	65
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Cognitive Flexibility.....	68
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Empathy.....	69
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Insight.....	70
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Self-Compassion.....	71
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Self-Monitoring.....	71
Self-Practice/Self-Reflection and Stress.....	72
Individual Case Studies.....	73
Experience of Self-Practice/Self-Reflection.....	74
Current Research Limitations.....	75
Implications of Findings and Suggestions for Future Research.....	76
<b>References.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Appendix A: Adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v3.0.....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Appendix B: Adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale.....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Appendix C: Cognitive Flexibility Inventory.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Appendix D: Perceived Stress Scale.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Appendix E: Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form.....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Appendix F: Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Appendix G: Participant Information Sheet.....</b>	<b>97</b>



<b>Appendix H: Participant Consent Form.....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Appendix I: Participant Instructions.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Appendix J: Demographic Information Sheet.....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Appendix K: Participant Reflections.....</b>	<b>103</b>

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1.</b>	Group Descriptive Statistics for the Adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v3.0.....	41
<b>Table 2.</b>	Group Descriptive Statistics for the Adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale.....	42
<b>Table 3.</b>	Group Descriptive Statistics for the Cognitive Flexibility Inventory.....	44
<b>Table 4.</b>	Group Descriptive Statistics for the Perceived Stress Scale.....	46
<b>Table 5.</b>	Group Descriptive Statistics for the Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form.....	48
<b>Table 6.</b>	Group Descriptive Statistics for the Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....	50

## List of Figures

<b>Figure 1.</b>	A simplified version of the declarative-procedural-reflective model (Bennett-Levy, Thwaites et al., 2009, p. 118).....	16
<b>Figure 2.</b>	Proposed model of impact of SP/SR by Bennett-Levy et al. (2001, p. 210).....	22
<b>Figure 3.</b>	The five data collection stages relating to the participants' 18-week SP/SR program.....	38
<b>Figure 4.</b>	Participant total scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0.....	41
<b>Figure 5.</b>	Participant total scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale.....	43
<b>Figure 6.</b>	Participant total scores for the Cognitive Flexibility Inventory.....	45
<b>Figure 7.</b>	Participant total scores for the Perceived Stress Scale.....	47
<b>Figure 8.</b>	Participant total scores for the Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form.....	49
<b>Figure 9.</b>	Participant total scores for the Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....	51
<b>Figure 10.</b>	Participant 1's measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....	52
<b>Figure 11.</b>	Participant 2's measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....	53

- Figure 12.** Participant 3’s measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....54
- Figure 13.** Participant 4’s measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....55
- Figure 14.** Participant 5’s measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....56
- Figure 15.** Participant 6’s measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....57
- Figure 16.** Participant 7’s measure scores for the adapted Cognitive Therapist Empathy Scale v.3.0, adapted Cognitive Therapist Self-Monitoring Scale, Cognitive Flexibility Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale, Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form, and Self-Reflection and Insight Scale.....58