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Therapists' Perceptions of Family Therapy

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ABSTRACT

Family therapy in New Zealand is practised by people with a wide variety of training and experience. Twelve therapists from diverse academic and professional backgrounds were interviewed about their perceptions of family therapy. Analysis of the interviews using a Grounded Theory approach found that therapists used a variety of ways of distinguishing family therapy from other therapeutic approaches. They stressed the importance of adequate initial and ongoing preparation. Therapists' descriptions of the therapy process included the different ideas about therapy held by therapists and clients (and the resolution of these differences); metaphors of action and danger; and the varied outcomes of family therapy. Discussion of the social and professional ecology of family therapy illustrated some of the constraints under which it was practised.

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