



Developing Humanistic Psychotherapy for Unwelcome Experiences of Presence



Are you experiencing the continued presence of a person who has died via a voice, a vision or other kind of feeling or sensation?

Do you experience this presence as intrusive or distressing?



As part of our research project we offer twelve sessions of individual humanistic psychotherapy free of charge for adults who are experiencing the unwelcome continued presence of a person who has died.

What is the project about?

Experiences of presence are a common and normal aspect of bereavement. They involve hearing the voice of someone after they have died, seeing a vision of them, or otherwise sensing or feeling that they are still around. Around 30% of people regard these experiences as unwelcome or distressing, and the aim of this study is to better understand how mental health professionals can help in these situations. The project is taking place at the CREST Therapy and Research Clinic at the University of Roehampton, and we aim to provide humanistic psychotherapy free of charge to 12 to 20 participants suffering from unwelcome experiences of presence.

What does it involve?

Should you choose to take part, you will be contacted by the researcher and asked for some information about yourself, the person who has died, and any experiences involving sensing or feeling that the person is still around. You will also be asked to complete some questionnaires. Should you decide to participate in the project, and should you meet the requirements to do so, you will be invited to receive 12 sessions of individual humanistic psychotherapy free of charge.

Each session will last 50 minutes. Psychotherapy will be provided within a research context by a clinician, and as part of your participation you will be asked to complete questionnaires during the process, meet with an interviewer at specified intervals, and sessions will also be video recorded. A last interview will take place, either face-to-face or via phone or videoconference, three months after the end of the therapy.

Can I take part?

If someone important to you has died, you have experienced their voice, a vision of them, their touch, or otherwise a sense or feeling that they are still around, and you regard these experiences as unwelcome or distressing, then you can take part in the study. If the person has died in the last three months, you cannot take part in this study yet but you will be able to once three months have passed, as long as this project is still running. You also need to be living in the United Kingdom and be 18 years old or over to participate. Students of the Department of Psychology of the University of Roehampton cannot take part in this study. If you have some further queries about whether you can take part in the study, you are welcome to call the investigator on the number specified in the following page.

Will my information be kept private?

Your rights to anonymity and confidentiality will be respected at all times. Your responses will be put together with responses from everyone else who has participated in the study, and so it will not be possible to trace back any information to you personally. Any information that identifies you personally (such as potentially identifiable details) will be changed so that it cannot be traced back to you as an individual.

What will you do with this information? The information you provide will be used to help psychologists, psychotherapists and doctors to better understand the needs that people have when someone important to them has died. The results of this study will be written up as journal articles and presented at conferences, but also made available through another media sources (such as information sheets and the radio) both for public information and as guidance for professionals.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind, you can withdraw your consent at any time by notifying us using the code that you will be given, although your responses may still be used in collated form.

Yes, I would like to take part. What do I do next?

Please, contact Pablo Sabucedo at: sabucedp@roehampton.ac.uk.

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