

Hoffart, A., Versland, S., & Sexton, H. (2002). Self-understanding, empathy, guided discovery, and schema belief in schema-focused cognitive therapy of personality problems: a process-outcome study. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 26, 199-219.

The aim of this study was to examine the dispositional and/or episodic influences of the process variables of self-understanding, empathy, guided discovery, and convictions about primary early maladaptive schema, which are central concepts in the schema-focused cognitive therapy of personality problems. The sample consisted of 35 patients with panic disorder and/or agoraphobia and DSM-IV Cluster C personality traits who participated in an 11-week inpatient program. Patients, therapists, and an expert observer rated individual therapy sessions. Greater patient-rated self-understanding the first session was related to greater decreases in schema belief and of emotional distress throughout therapy. Greater therapist-rated empathic experience the first session was related to greater decreases in distress throughout therapy. Session-by-session analyses revealed few sequential relationships. However, a greater in-session reduction of schema belief weakly predicted lower level of pre-session distress the next session, and vice versa. The study illustrates how to intensively measure and model change in psychotherapy, using both growth curve and time series analyses.