

Autoethnographic Reflections on 30 Years of Teaching Psychodynamic Psychotherapy to Students in Professional Psychology Training

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ABSTRACT

Teaching university postgraduate students has been a lifelong fulfilling career. Drawing on theoretical frames from autoethnography, the aim of this paper is to share my autoethnographic reflections on 30 years of teaching psychodynamic psychotherapy to senior postgraduate students in professional psychology training. Far from being an indulgent trip down memory lane, sharing my teaching experiences has the intention to offer value in terms of documenting the socio-cultural and historical changes that took place during this period, and in so doing, to offer educators a personal understanding of the impact of such developments on teaching. Three key areas of change have been identified. These are in classroom demography, curriculum, and technology. Using these key areas of change as themes that traverse the time periods of my teaching, I write about my development of a sense of identity as a lecturer and also about three main lessons learned along the way. The first lesson is the power of experiential learning; the second lesson is teaching students about empathy, a core concept in psychotherapy; and the third lesson is the power of personal growth and awareness of self. It is suggested that these lessons have implications for pedagogy.

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Introduction

I am nearing the end of my professional career, spanning more than 30 years, in teaching psychology. I have achieved the designation of Professor of Psychology and held a National Research Foundation (NRF) rating for more than a decade. This 30-year period comprises employment in two Departments of Psychology at two South African universities. The first university – Rhodes University - established more than 120 years ago in the rural area of the Eastern Cape, at a so-called “historically White” university, is where I was employed from 1991 until March 2008. The second university – the University of Johannesburg (UJ) - where I currently work, is in another province. My employment period at UJ has been from April 2008 to the present date so there was no break in this three-decade period. During these 30 years, I worked full time, had a private practice after hours seeing clients for psychodynamic psychotherapy, and obtained my PhD in 1998 with no breaks from university lecturing workload or funding to complete the PhD. In terms of my teaching experience, I have taught psychology at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Some of the undergraduate class sizes ranged from 350 to 1700 students, while the postgraduate class sizes ranged from 10 to 12 students in the professional psychology training programme to 90 students at the honours level.

Psychodynamic psychotherapy is an established approach to the treatment of psychological disorders. With roots in psychoanalytic theory and practice, it continues to remain a widely used modality of psychotherapy in the professional psychology training programmes at most universities in South Africa (Knight, 2023). The historical role of psychology during Apartheid in perpetuating racist, exclusionary policies has been extensively documented (Mayekiso, Strydom, Jithoo & Katz, 2004; Manganyi, 2016; Padmanabhanunni, Jackson, Noordien, Pretorius & Bouchard, 2022). The implication is that during the Apartheid era, professional psychology training, and thus training in psychotherapy, including psychodynamic psychotherapy, was not available to Black students, who were excluded from previously White universities (Mayekiso *et al.*, 2004; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021; Knight, 2023). In post-Apartheid South Africa all students, regardless of race, have been free to apply for positions in professional psychology training programmes.

My teaching years include important socio-cultural and historical transitional periods. The first such transitional period was from the last years of Apartheid to post-1994 elections and the dismantling of Apartheid. The second transitional period, as mentioned, was the move from Rhodes University to UJ, a large residential university with over 30 000 students. UJ had been a historically White university (Rand Afrikaans University) (RAU), catering for Afrikaans students. UJ soon became a predominantly

Black African university (92% Black African by 2020), with most students being of Zulu descent. Social constructs such as race, Africanness, power, and culture are imbued in all forms of South African life and filter down into the classroom. My positionality as a White woman, not from South Africa (and thus not having lived and grown up in Apartheid South Africa), but naturalised as a citizen after 16 years, required ongoing negotiation of intersectionality between race, belonging, and identity with a shifting demography of students. I often think about the impact on my racial identity of having not grown up in this country during Apartheid. I arrived here in the mid-1980s in my mid-20s to study at Rhodes University. I like to think that my positive childhood educational experiences of racial integration in the classroom went some way to negotiating my racial identity in relation to my new country which was, at that time, in political upheaval and transition. More importantly, I like to think that they assisted me in understanding experiences of race and racism in the classroom.

A third transitional period was the shift from in-person teaching to online teaching, spanning three years. This shift was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown that impacted on how teaching was done and students' learning experiences. Some students never walked the corridors of UJ because they were forced to stay at home. This lockdown was especially challenging because the nature of professional psychology training is to train students to compassionately engage with clients suffering from mental distress, create rapport, and help them find solutions for their distress. How does one do this training online? The fourth transition was a return to in-person teaching that brought about many new challenges for myself and the students, both psychological and professional. Some of these challenges, like returning to the office after three years of working and teaching from home, were difficult tasks in emotional, psychological, and social adjustment. During any major transitional period such as these, there are inevitable personal adjustments for most educators and students (Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust & Bond, 2020; Usher, Golding, Han, Griffiths, McGavran, Brown *et al.*, 2024). I was not exempt. I found such shifts to be anxiety-provoking.

In my experience of teaching specifically psychodynamic psychotherapy to postgraduate students in professional psychology training, i.e., clinical and counselling training at the master's level, I have witnessed, within the context of these socio-cultural and historical transitional periods described above, three areas of change: in classroom demography, curriculum, and technology.

Drawing on theoretical frames from the qualitative research method known as autoethnography, the aim of this paper is to share my autoethnographic reflections on 30 years of teaching psychodynamic psychotherapy to master's students in professional psychology training. Autoethnography is a

qualitative form of reflective self-narration in which researchers use their own experience reflexively to “look more deeply at self-other interactions” (Holt, 2003:19). The self-other interaction explored in this study is in relation to students, colleagues, and the university context, as well as the wider social context in which educational changes took place. This approach means that my personal experiences are centralized so that the reader is orientated to my personal thoughts, observations and feelings (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013). As such, autoethnography is an accepted approach to research in which the researcher examines self-experience in relation to life experiences and events, thus highlighting self-experience as a tool for knowledge production. It recognises self-experience as a valuable social phenomenon and worthy of examination (Edwards, 2021). The additional value of autoethnography lies in how it positions subjectivity - as a resource rather than a potential threat to knowledge production (Nguyen-Trung, 2024). Due to this value in subjectivity, I have selected the autoethnographic approach to narrate my personal reflections on teaching during this 30-year period. Far from being a project of introspection and a trip down memory lane, sharing my teaching experiences is intended to provide value in terms of mapping some of the socio-cultural and historical changes that took place during this 30-year period and thus to offer university educators an understanding of the impact of such developments on teaching. Using these three areas of change (in classroom demography, curriculum, and technology) I weave my lifetime and personal narrative of teaching into distinct time periods. These periods are the early, middle, later, and final years of teaching.

Early Years (1991 – 2004)

When I first began teaching in 1991, there was no internet, no Google, no smartphones, no Tik Tok, no WhatsApp, no Twitter, no Facebook, no iPads, no laptops, no Google Maps, and no supportive teaching computer-based teaching aids such as PowerPoint and Excel. Computers were bulky desktops with bulky hard drives. Desktop computers ran on programmes that had no additional features that exist today, such as Editor, Reference, Spelling, and Design. In those early years, part of my limited teaching tools comprised ‘transparencies’ (clear, thin, A4 size plastic sheets) and a projector. I also had the use of VHS video tapes and video machines ordered from overseas at great expense. I personally photocopied copious chapters from books and journals for the students as these publications were too expensive for students to buy, and so there was no other way to disseminate the vast amounts of reading material.

Although the internet began in the 1980s, at Rhodes University where I first worked it took many years to become accessible and, more importantly, influential in teaching. Once the internet was more firmly established in the mid-1990s, its impact on teaching was positive. I began to adapt and replace outdated teaching tools. This transition was an anxiety-provoking experience as there was little training offered by the Department. We had to rapidly figure things out, such as how to use PowerPoint and Excel, how to attach documents to emails, how to use the Cloud as a storage site, and create and distribute electronic e-links that opened new tabs on websites. The notion of a website was initially a foreign term. As the years passed, I became more confident with advanced technology and my teaching style shifted to more modern ways of imparting information and knowledge.

In the early years I had little choice in what I taught. With regard to professional psychology training, the demand for qualified psychologists to teach was high. Colleagues who had been appointed before me were given some options in what to teach and when some of these colleagues left the university, it created a gap for me. I was lucky to have the opportunity to choose modules and subjects. Within two years of my appointment in 1991, I was teaching psychodynamic psychotherapy to the clinical and counselling students.

The small class allowed greater discussion and engagement with the students, which is what made teaching so enjoyable. In a small class, on the one hand, quiet students were noticeable, and I could gently coax them to be more involved. Such coaxing came easily to me, as it was based on my clinical training of how to create rapport with clients. On the other hand, more engaging students could dominate the class discussion, and this was also addressed by encouraging them to speak but also to give a turn to others. In a sense, I was teaching them how to be with clients, in that clients needed to have time to speak and space in which to express their views.

While I taught other modules in clinical and counselling psychology, it was the psychodynamic psychotherapy that I enjoyed the most and that became my primary teaching field and the area in which I eventually specialised. Finding my theoretical home or place early on during my years of teaching was important because it allowed me to focus and develop my career. When I started teaching in 1991, I was not given a lecturer to mentor me nor was there any training for new lecturers in how to teach, let alone how to teach psychodynamic psychotherapy. My experience as an academic was that this kind of work was a lonely one. It required that you 'sink or swim', and I got the impression that no one cared if you did either. At this point in time, I did not view any colleagues as supportive or nurturing. I saw them engage in a competitive academic culture of "publish or perish" that demanded

performance as measured by publication outputs. This seemed to me to be at the expense of collegiality and kindness to others.

During this period, I was often younger or the same age as the students and, initially, I felt nervous, and experienced my inexperience as a hindrance that developed into a sense of insecurity and lack of confidence. A few years later, however, I did connect with a few older, supportive colleagues. I was grateful for this experience. It helped me in my development of a strong self-esteem. In my view, teaching as a young academic, and its links to a developing confidence in the classroom, is often connected to finding a sense of belonging to a community of supportive colleagues.

It was, however, my own personal psychotherapy experience that created a life-long thirst to know more about how it worked and how internal psychological change in therapy happens. I took what I learned about myself in therapy into the classroom. For example, I modelled what was said to me in therapy in teaching the class how to be with clients, such as “How did that make you feel?” My therapist was a senior professor and colleague. His influence on my early academic development in teaching psychodynamic psychotherapy was noteworthy. In addition to being a client and learning directly from him how to be a therapist, I used some of my own clients presenting problems to illustrate to the students’ certain therapeutic processes such as transference and countertransference.

My dual identity as client and therapist created a positive source of personal knowledge about the process of therapy that added to my developing identity as a lecturer in the classroom. Personal experience is not a new concept in education and pedagogy. Dyches and Boyd (2017) recontextualised Shulman’s (1987) original notion of pedagogical content knowledge, which demonstrates that an educator’s knowledge about (curriculum or content), and knowledge how (pedagogy), are built together through both action and personal experience. Since then, other educators have demonstrated how personal experience positively aids teaching pedagogy (Almager, 2018). In this regard, based on my personal experience as a client, I learned to teach the students to be aware of why their clients come to therapy (what do they need help for?), because this is an important starting point in understanding their clients and contextualising the boundaries of therapy and what can be offered.

It was, however, through my own personal therapy as a client that I began to understand experientially that ‘the relationship is the therapy’, meaning that there is a need to create a good rapport and

empathic collaborative relationship with the client for the process to work. In the ensuing years, this became my personal dictum when teaching.

I did not solely rely on personal experience in the classroom. I engaged in extensive data collection and research into psychodynamic perspectives on the genesis and functioning of the troubled mind. I wrote numerous peer-reviewed articles on this modality and its processes. In addition to standard texts, these research findings were disseminated to the classroom. At that time, from a position of inexperience and lack of training, pedagogy was mostly teacher-focused rather than student-focused. In a drive to derail this inadequate process, I sought ways to include students without knowing that there was a trend to shift to this more student-focused approach. Teaching psychotherapy theory without showing how it is done is useless in the learning experience of students. To assist students to develop a deeper understanding of psychodynamic practice, I accessed video materials showing how the therapy processes work, and what happens between client and therapist. In the early years, I had little access to such material, a contrast to today and how easy it is to obtain this. Much of the literature on the theory lacked an indication as to how the therapist worked with the client. Even today there remains a dearth of scholarly reading material showing what is said between client and therapist. In addition to videos, I began to teach through role-plays, thus acting out scenarios with the students that reflected psychodynamic therapy processes.

Post-1994 elections and the years that followed (mid-1990s to early 2000s) required change and adjustment in the educational system, including modifications to the psychology curriculum, that needed to incorporate African cultures and African psychology. With little training, this transformational process was initially muddled, with limited information provided on what kinds of African psychologies to integrate, or how to do so, and minimal teacher guidance. At this early stage, there was a lack of psychology and psychotherapy publications by local African academics on this change process and what could be the best practice and how to manage it. At Rhodes University where I worked, there were mostly White psychology staff so there was a major learning curve for all involved in the training, especially in psychotherapy training. It seemed to me as a young staff member with little experience that much of the departmental management system did not have a clear view of how to adjust the curriculum or teaching styles.

As students from other races entered the training programme, much of the curriculum was undergoing changes to integrate African psychology with Western perspectives, but it was still in the early stages. I felt unsettled and lacked direction as to what to teach. Eventually, the integration of

African and Western perspectives began to combine more smoothly. The impact of this combination was largely positive. This was partially achieved by inviting local *sangomas* to the classroom to share and speak about their views on experiences that look, to the Western eye, like psychosis, but could be a spiritual event or calling of the ancestors, a process known as *Ukuthwasa*. At this time, I did not realise how progressive this was because many other training institutions did nothing like this in terms of introducing African perspectives. This inspired me to implement some of my own research that had a focus on African experiences in terms of mental health (Knight, 1997). I used an assortment of emerging psychology literature (e.g., Madu, 2002) to engage in ongoing critical discussions of “decolonialisation”, a term that had many meanings for many people. Perhaps because no one agreed with what decolonialisation was, changes in the psychology curriculum took longer to implement.

While I still taught Freud and his concepts as well as the new developments in the perspective of psychodynamic therapy, I positioned this perspective as one among other perspectives that detail differing views of understanding the troubled mind. To this end, the content of my teaching also changed to include a foregrounding of multicultural counselling. This meant a focus on training students, now racially integrated, about how to approach clients that were ethnically different from them. Such shifts continued into the early 2000s and the following decades. This was a time of critical engagement with both the students and the theories of psychotherapy in terms of their suitability to the changing demography of the classroom and of clients. At this time, critical discussion was becoming stronger and more heated on this concern of the suitability of psychology and psychotherapy in post-apartheid South Africa (Madu, 2002; De la Rey & Isper, 2004). Over the ensuing years, such voices of critique would increase (e.g., Cooper, 2014; Manganyi, 2016; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021).

Middle Years (2004-2014)

The teaching years from 2004 to 2014 were a deepening consolidation of my psychodynamic psychotherapy course as well as my deepening understanding of African psychology. My psychodynamic course included new developments at that time in relational psychoanalysis, such as the issue of therapist “self-disclosure” in psychotherapy (Farber, 2003), and “race in psychotherapy” (Straker, 2004; Swartz, 2007; Knight, 2013). Race and psychotherapy became central to my teaching because this was my personal experience as a “White therapist” working with a “Black client”. Classroom discussions and training included the debates on race and racialised transference. Such

“race talk” and training psychology students to work therapeutically with diversity among clients were experienced by the students in a positive way, judging from their formal feedback to me.

It was during this time that I added to the content of teaching psychodynamic psychotherapy theories which had consisted of Object Relations Theories and Relational Psychoanalytic theories the theory of “Self Psychology”, as proposed by Heinz Kohut (1971, 1984). The Self Psychology perspective added a richness to the psychodynamic understanding of psychic development and a further theoretical conceptualisation as to how to understand and treat narcissism. Students reported that this material was easier to understand and helped them to effectively conceptualise their client cases and, as a result, it remained core to my teaching portfolio.

In 2008, I moved to UJ, where transformation was rapid, both in terms of student and staff demography, and curriculum change. My psychodynamic psychotherapy training class reflected this demographic change. As the years passed, I noticed, however, that while it was to be expected that there would be fewer White students in the class, I also observed fewer students from other race groups, such as Indians, “Coloureds”¹, or Asians, in it. The implication was that there was less representation and thus less diversity in the classroom.

Facilitation of classroom discussion is a teaching skill often not taught when becoming a new lecturer. In my experience, it is a skill that brings diverse student voices and experiences to the foreground. In the teaching of psychotherapy, students often struggle to know how to create rapport with their clients. Classroom discussions often led to requests for case examples and role-plays. These were incorporated in the pedagogy. As the training includes listening skills used with clients, students were taught to listen to their peers and learn from their peers. These practical skills of listening created a space for their voices and opinions to be heard, respected and engaged with. In the latter years, perhaps around 2010-2014, and as I became more experienced at teaching, PowerPoint slides were de-centralised in favour of student discussions. The impact of this meant that we had more time to engage with one another in direct conversations, which could not be achieved with the use of PowerPoint slides.

The process of curriculum change that had begun at Rhodes University continued at UJ. To my mind it became more about the Africanisation of psychology and the marginalisation of Western thinking

¹ “Coloureds” are an officially recognised, multi-racial ethnic group in South Africa who have a diverse ancestry, including Khoisan, Bantu, European, Malay, and Asian roots.

than about where Western thinking and African thinking may have some commonalities and possibilities for theoretical integration. Instead, it seemed to me that the socio-cultural politics of decolonisation had lost sight of this. This left me, as a White, Western woman, feeling that there was no place for psychodynamic psychotherapy. While I understood the oppressive role that psychology and Western models of psychotherapy had during apartheid, it felt like a theoretical muzzling of anything White and Western, that they were “bad” and to be discarded.

With decolonialisation processes underway in the curriculum, the psychodynamic content continued to change to reflect this ongoing development. The class discussions and case studies changed to reflect the different African cultures that exist in South Africa. This was a shift from previous years of only using case studies representative of White and Western problems to include case studies showing the various Black African cultures that exist and their concerns regarding, for example, inter-racial relationships, female struggles for equality in patriarchal society, and stress related to marriage rituals such as *lobola*. In addition, the content remained reflective of cross-cultural counselling.

Later Years (2014 to 2022)

During the period from 2014 to 2022, my identity as an academic was firmly rooted. I always, however, had a sense of the loneliness of this work. My research was done alone, my preparations for teaching were done alone, my conference attendance was largely done alone, and I had few colleagues as friends. Despite this, I was finding my place as a lecturer, enjoying the classes and students, and was less concerned with developing a reputation. Instead, while I performed the actions of an academic required of me at UJ that, like most other universities, values reputation through such actions as publications and NRF ratings, I found my purpose and meaning in teaching. I developed a teaching philosophy that aimed not only to help these psychology students develop competence “in doing psychotherapy” but also, by implication, to help future clients who would be at the receiving end of these students’ skills. While I taught only a few students each year, I knew that what I was teaching would reverberate throughout their professional lives, and that this teaching of how to do this kind of therapy was my legacy. In this regard, the classroom was for me an important space of engagement with future psychologists, and one from which they would take this knowledge with them long after I have left academia.

In this regard, I kept up to date with all the new trends and developments in the practice of psychodynamic psychotherapy, such as the inclusion of intersubjectivity theory (Benjamin, 2018), or

new ways to approach interpretation (Geist, 2020), intergenerational transmission of trauma (Feldman, 2015), and, specifically, intergenerational transmission of Black parental trauma in South Africa as it emerges in the analytical space of inter-racial subjectivities (Knight, 2019). I linked all these concepts to provoking students' thoughts and discussions about psychodynamic theory and practice, and how it can relate to their personal lives to make meaning of their own stresses, as well as how it can relate to their clients. It was an exciting time of conceptual development as well as content changes to the course.

With the advancement of technology, the need to adapt my teaching style to accommodate this was also exciting rather than daunting. It was so easy to find journal articles on specific topics such as race and psychology, multicultural counselling, and to include YouTube videos in the classroom. During this period, I initiated further curriculum developments towards the inclusion of updated research on African psychology literature (Mkhize, 2018, 2021; Ratele, 2019; Nwoye, 2021).

During 2020 – 2022, classes shifted to “emergency online” teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency online education, as opposed to remote or online teaching, involved a sudden and unexpected shift to digital learning without adequate preparation in response to crisis conditions (Hodges *et al.*, 2020). Multiple studies have found that the pandemic had negative effects on the university student population worldwide (Šakan, 2020). This emergency online teaching presented new technological challenges, such as how to use online platforms, how to find data, and how to stay connected to the internet when it was slow and expensive. UJ did not initially cope with the volume of students moving to emergency online teaching. It was an anxiety-provoking and difficult time for most students and staff, including me, because there was a constant anxiety about loss of internet connectivity as well as not knowing what to do when technology failed during a class. This meant that all my lectures needed to be pre-recorded and uploaded so that students could download them. This access to emergency online teaching was costly for students and staff. UJ assisted with data costs. Teaching and pre-recording lectures was time consuming and exhausting. Many students reported mental distress such as depression, suicidal ideation, anxiety, and loneliness, mental health symptoms which corresponded to research in other parts of the world showing similar psychological stress in many university students (Brooks, Webster, Smith, Woodland, Wessely, Greenberg *et al.*, 2020; Šakan, Toth-Kiraly & Morin, 2023). The pandemic led to a decline in motivation to learn compared to in-person classroom learning (Corpus, Robinson & Liu, 2022), along with a decline in satisfaction of basic psychological needs, such as a sense of belonging, which are important sources of academic motivation (González-Ramírez, Mulqueen, K., Zealand, Silverstein, Mulqueen, C., BuShell *et al.*, 2021;

Tasso, Hisli Sahin & San Roman, 2021; Usher *et al.*, 2024). During these three years, I never met these students in person. I lost the experience of interpersonal in-person connection, which left me feeling dislocated and living in a surreal world where my computer screen became a poor substitute for connection and physical relationships. The experience of isolation and disconnection was difficult to manage. My curriculum underwent changes to accommodate students' emotional needs such as discussion time that dealt with their personal struggles. It was an emotionally difficult time for me to see students struggle with mental health issues because, to my mind, they should have been enjoying student life on campus as had previously been the norm. The role plays continued online but they lacked the in-person experience or personal engagement, and this made for less enriching teaching experience as I felt detached and separated from the students.

The return to in-person teaching towards the end of 2022 was an enormous relief. I was so happy to see the students again in class again. They were a new cohort of students, and the first ones I had worked with since the lockdown in 2020. The added joy for me was in the return to in-person role plays and experiential work. It was such a positive experience and improved the mental health of everyone, especially me.

Final years (2023-2025)

The social and academic trend of decolonisation in the curriculum throughout the educational system continued. In class, we continued to discuss and examine the relevance of psychodynamic psychotherapy and psychopathology. I continued to teach the theories of psychodynamic psychotherapy alongside the inclusion of African traditional perspectives on mental health concerns. With further advancements in technology and quicker access to e-literature, my teaching style also altered. I included more social media apps and use of YouTube, as well as updating my socio-cultural topics and their impact on psychotherapy. I changed my focus to the impact of empathy as core to change in psychotherapy as documented in Self Psychology (Kohut, 1981, 1984; Geist, 2013). To this end, I wanted students to become aware of the power of the relationship through which empathy could be experienced by clients, and how it could be used in the process of recovery. I felt that empathy was a doorway to deepening an understanding of the suffering and distress that some clients may present. Teaching students how to empathically understand their clients, and by implication, how to listen to them, became core to my work.

Conclusion

Teaching university students has been a lifelong rewarding career. At the time I began my career as a lecturer in 1991 I did not know that teaching would traverse more than 30 years of my adult life. While there were many lessons learned along the way, there are three major ones that stand out. The first lesson is the power of experiential learning, which is not new to teaching pedagogy (Gibbs, 2022). This implies that students need an experience of doing psychotherapy and not just an explanation as to how it works. Role plays and my demonstration as a therapist with students as role-playing clients meant that they had this experiential learning. This way of teaching has become central to my teaching pedagogy and values. In this way, students learn how it develops, what can be said and done, how the presenting problem can be worked with, and how change comes about.

The second lesson, as indicated, is teaching students about empathy, a core concept in psychotherapy. This is a crucial lesson because the work of psychotherapists is to hear (and bear witness to) their clients' stories of distress and conflict. Empathy starts with being empathic towards oneself. Teaching students to be empathic is teaching them how to not only listen to their clients but listen with compassion to themselves. So little is said about this in class in terms of professional psychology training, which is at odds with the helping profession itself.

Linked to this lesson is the third lesson, which is the power of personal growth and awareness of self. One cannot be a teacher of psychotherapy if one has not struggled and confronted one's own inner demons. Such struggles and confrontation make for a better therapist because it means one has personally grappled with one's inner demons and can thus relate to, and understand, the struggles that clients go through. It builds empathy for others.

These lessons learned have implications for pedagogy. As indicated, the notion of experiential learning in pedagogy is not new. My personal experiences can confirm the literature on this, indicating that students learn from *doing* this kind of psychotherapy rather than just being verbally taught how to do psychotherapy. Pedagogy with empathy are not the usual teaching skills. Teaching students' empathy means teaching *with* empathy. Being empathic to students goes far in teaching them how to be empathic therapists. This means that pedagogy needs to incorporate empathy into the way we teach students. Finally, personal experience of working through life's disappointments and frustrations presents a unique pedagogy opportunity in that such inner work offers a deeper understanding of self

in relation to others. This becomes crucial in teaching students to know themselves in order to be of service to their clients.

Finally, as a concluding comment, there has been much change over the past 30 years in terms of classroom demography, curriculum, and technology, but the overarching sense for me was the enjoyment in teaching, despite the loneliness of the work. My journey has brought me the wonderful discovery of eager students willing to learn, to learn from one another, and how they have been an integral part of my personal development and identity as an academic.

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