

Title: Standing in the Clearing: A Phenomenology of Openness in late Heidegger – a guide for Research-practitioners.

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Abstract

How does philosophy inform practice? This research seeks to weave philosophy, namely Heidegger's later thinking, with lived experience in order to gain an understanding of Openness and explore the relevance to psychotherapy. It is a phenomenological inquiry, which starts with the central tenet of Heidegger's later thinking – namely that human nature, *Being-in-the-world*, is Openness. The concept of Openness is elusive and Heidegger used the metaphor of a forest clearing to describe what he meant.

“The quiet heart of the clearing is the place of stillness from which alone the possibility of the belonging together of Being and thinking, that is presence and apprehending, can arise at all.” (Heidegger, Basic Writings 1993: 445)

Heidegger's *Being and thinking*, described above, is awareness - that essential component of psychological well-being. In the still space of the clearing things arise, likewise in therapy, the calm presence of Openness lets things be, enabling awareness, acceptance and ultimately integration. Through the use of text analysis (Heidegger's later writings), a review of the secondary literature, interviews with participants, exploration of metaphor and anecdotal writing the researcher gathers data from a rich diversity of sources. Using the methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology and extensive reference to Max van Manen's phenomenology of practice (1990, 2002, 2014) the researcher builds a picture of Openness and how it informs therapeutic practice. Products included: a peer reviewed paper, conference workshop, an article, a book proposal and an invitation to participate in the first Metanoia Research Academy.

Key Words

Heidegger, Openness, the Clearing (die Litchung), Hermeneutic Phenomenology, van Manen, anecdotes, aletheia, dwelling, Gelassenheit