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**Main Themes**

Which techniques for existential therapy?

**Keywords**

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**Title**

Balancing Depth and Relief: Existential Therapy in an Anxious World

**Abstract for**

Discussion Room

**Abstract**

How can existential therapists respond to clients seeking immediate relief from pressing issues like panic attacks, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, and other acute distress? Does existential therapy provide tools for addressing such urgent symptoms, or does its value lie elsewhere?

In an age increasingly dominated by anxiety, loneliness, and a pervasive quick-fix mindset shaped by social media, we wonder how in-depth therapy can adapt and thrive. How can we balance the need to address immediate suffering with the commitment to our existential principles?

Clients often present with a variety of urgent concerns, including panic attacks, acute traumatic stress, suicidal ideation, overwhelming grief, or existential despair following significant life changes. Other forms of distress, such as identity crises, burnout, or cultural and social displacement, further challenge therapists to navigate the intersection of immediate symptom relief and deeper existential inquiry.

Some practitioners have creatively adapted techniques from other modalities through an existential lens. What lessons can be drawn from these integrations, and how do they align with existential foundations? Does offering immediate symptom relief risk undermining existential depth, or can it serve as an entry point for deeper work? At what levels does agony help us go deeper, and at what levels might it hinder that effort? How can we discern when a level of agony is therapeutically beneficial versus when it becomes a barrier to growth?

We invite existential therapists from diverse countries, cultures, and training backgrounds to share their experiences, perspectives, and strategies for navigating these challenges. This discussion will provide a platform to explore how existential therapy can remain relevant and effective in helping clients confront both immediate and profound existential concerns.

This discussion room will be facilitated by Anna Micheli and Alexandros Herling.

Anna Micheli is a trained existential psychotherapist from Athens, Greece, a former actor and theatre director and she has a BSc in marketing and communications.

Alexandros Herling is a psychologist and trained existential psychotherapist.

**User ID**

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