

## **Teaching Foundations of Depth Psychology in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences. Evaluation research using qualitative content analysis**

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### **Objektive**

To classify which aspects of the module *Foundations of Depth Psychology* in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences influenced the students' view of their own professional work most.

### **Introduction**

Integrating *Foundations of Depth Psychology* into the traditional competency field of professionals in complementary medicine, complementary healing arts and progressive teaching was defined as an essential goal of a Master's Program funded by the European Commission (Leonardo project). The *inter-uni.net for integrated health sciences* ([www.inter-uni.net](http://www.inter-uni.net)) developed a teaching and learning module geared to this aim which included 3 months distance learning and 2 on-site workshops whose benefits were evaluated after being offered for several years.

### **Methods**

The question (cf. Objective) was posed to 121 students who had completed the module. Members of helping professions with a "complementary" or "progressive" focus and usually long years of professional experience supplied a handwritten response to the question (one page). The ratio of female to male respondents was 3:2. The responses were investigated and categorized via qualitative content analysis (Mayring).

### **Results**

Approximately 60% of the respondents stated that as a result of the module, assistance provided (to clients, patients and, in the case of teachers, to pupils) had *increased in efficiency*. 54% cited an improved understanding of factors which are decisive where *interpersonal communication* is concerned – for example in their helping interactions. In particular the dynamic of transference was named. Some 41% claimed to have deepened their *self-awareness* through the module. Another frequently cited category (37%) was *improved subjective satisfaction with one's profession*. 10% claimed that the module had reduced their own *prejudices against depth-psychological concepts*.

Among the spontaneously cited power factors of optimized communication which the module under investigation had offered access to, an *authentic relationship* (54%), *harmony between empathy and confrontation* (24%), the *importance of attention* (21%) and *an open view* (17%), the capacity for *holding and containing* (17%) as well as *humor* were named (9%).

### **Conclusion**

Teaching *Foundations of Depth Psychology* in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences appears to be a suitable means for optimizing one's own professional work in the sense of increased efficiency and an enhanced degree of professional satisfaction.