

## **Ability to help the client explore the unconscious dynamics influencing their relationships**

### **Knowledge**

An ability to draw on knowledge that the origins of the client's difficulties will normally lie in their early relational experiences
An ability to draw on knowledge that both internal and external forces shape the mind and therefore inform our perception of ourselves in relationships with others
An ability to draw on knowledge that unconscious projective and introjective processes underpin the client's subjective experience of their relationships

### **Application**

#### **Ability to formulate the client's internal world of relationships (as the basis for helping them to understand their subjective experiences of relationships)**

An ability to listen out for recurring interpersonal and affective patterns in the client's past and current relationships:
an ability to identify recurring configurations of 'self' and 'other' representations
an ability to identify areas of omission from the client's descriptions of their relationships (e.g. a pervasive absence of conflict)
An ability to make use of the experience and observation of the client's ways of relating within the session to inform the understanding of the client's internal world of relationships

#### **Ability to help the client explore their feelings when in a relationship**

An ability to help the client identify and understand recurring affective patterns in their relationships, particularly by exploring how these play out in the relationship with the therapist
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#### **Ability to help the client explore the defences mobilised in relationships**

An ability to help the client identify areas of difficulty in their relationships
An ability to help the client understand the unconscious strategies they use to manage areas of difficulty in their relationships
An ability to help the client reflect on behaviours and feelings which perpetuate or exacerbate interpersonal difficulties