

Changing Self/Changing World: the question of change from the perspective of existential psychotherapy

While the question of change can be viewed as an inevitable and on-going feature of life, psychotherapists tend to focus their attention and skills on a particularly interventionist or therapist-directed understanding of change. By so doing, psychotherapists tend to present themselves as 'symptom-removers', 'treatment-providers', 'directive educators' or 'professional helpers'. Existential psychotherapy, in contrast to dominant psychotherapeutic assumptions regarding change, argues that it may be a wiser (and more achievable) task for psychotherapists to assist persons to recognise their resistance to, and attempts to control, the unexpected and uncontrollable changes in their lives rather than guide them in any direct manner towards novel ways of change. Paradoxically, this approach suggests that it is via the very process of clarifying and challenging peoples' *stance towards* change that the benefits of 'therapeutic change' can be seen to occur.

This one-day Professional Training will focus upon issues centred on the question of change as presented by various aspects in the theory and practice of existential psychotherapy.

Professor Ernesto Spinelli has gained an international reputation as one of the leading contemporary trainers and theorists of existential analysis as applied to psychology and psychotherapy and, more recently, the related arenas of coaching, facilitation and conflict mediation. He is a UKCP registered existential psychotherapist, a Fellow of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) as well as an accredited executive coach and coaching supervisor. In 1999, Ernesto was awarded a Personal Chair as Professor of psychotherapy, counselling and counselling psychology. Ernesto is Director of ES Associates, an organisation dedicated to the advancement of psychotherapy, coaching, facilitation and mediation through specialist seminars and training programmes. His most recent book, *Practising Existential Psychotherapy: The Relational World* (Sage, 2007) has been widely praised as a major contribution to the advancement of existential theory and practice and has been translated into Danish.