

Mental Health, Psychiatry and Wellbeing

March 20-21, 2019 | New York, USA

ACCEPTED ABSTRACTS

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH AND HUMAN RESILIENCE 2019, VOLUME 21

DOI: 10.4172/1522-4821-C2-030

The Relation of Nonverbal Synchrony and Therapeutic Alliance Ruptures

Jack Trevor Friedman, Jeremy Safran, Jerzy Kaufmann, Howard Steele, Miriam Steele
The New School for Social Research, USA

The study of nonverbal synchrony examines the degree to which individuals' nonverbal cues, such as body movement, coordinate in time. Within the psychotherapeutic dyad, nonverbal synchrony has been shown to correlate with therapeutic alliance and outcome (Ramseyer & Tschacher, 2011). However, nonverbal synchrony research has yet to address

ruptures in the therapeutic alliance.

To address this gap, the present study analyzed an archive of client-therapist video-films comprising 118 fifty-minute sessions that were collected in the early 1990s and subjected to rigorous study by Jeremy Safran and his research students. The naturalistic sample consisted of 14 therapist-patient dyads, who completed 12 sessions (6 weeks of relational psychodynamic therapy and 6 weeks of cognitive behavioral therapy). 118 sessions were included, as some were omitted due to quality. Patients and therapists provided self-reports of rupture frequency, intensity

and resolution, after each session. Nonverbal synchrony values were computed using a software program called Motion Energy Analysis (MEA), which quantifies bodily motion by tracking frame-to-frame pixel changes.

Results showed that there was no significant correlation between MEA synchrony and rupture frequency or intensity. However, when patients perceived a rupture in a session ($n=20$), synchrony correlated negatively with perceptions that the rupture was resolved, $r = -.572$, $p = .005$. Low and moderate synchrony was, in other words, linked up with patients' reporting the rupture was resolved.

friej594@newschool.edu