Abstract

This research explores how narrative therapy lends itself to a decolonizing approach to counselling Indigenous Canadians. Preliminary areas of alignment between Indigenous wholism and narrative therapy literature are identified. Given the limited scholarship on narrative therapy in Canadian contexts, professional experiences of narrative practice with Indigenous Canadians were sought using an adapted method of collaborative narrative inquiry. Arvay’s (2003) method was adapted to include Indigenous research principles which guided the process. Three narratives are presented: two qualitative interviews were conducted with mental health professionals who practice narrative therapy with Indigenous clients. I include my narrative from the perspective of an Indigenous counsellor who was trained in narrative therapy. Stories reveal ways narrative therapy has supported decolonizing these professionals’ practice, as well as areas of Indigenous healing that are not sufficiently attended to within a narrative approach (e.g., spirituality and embodied experiences). Implications for a decolonizing approach to counselling are discussed.

Keywords: Decolonization; Indigenous research methods; Indigenous wholism; Narrative therapy; Narrative inquiry; Counselling