

# We do science not clients?

Arts Therapies Research through  
small-*n* designs

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# Introduction

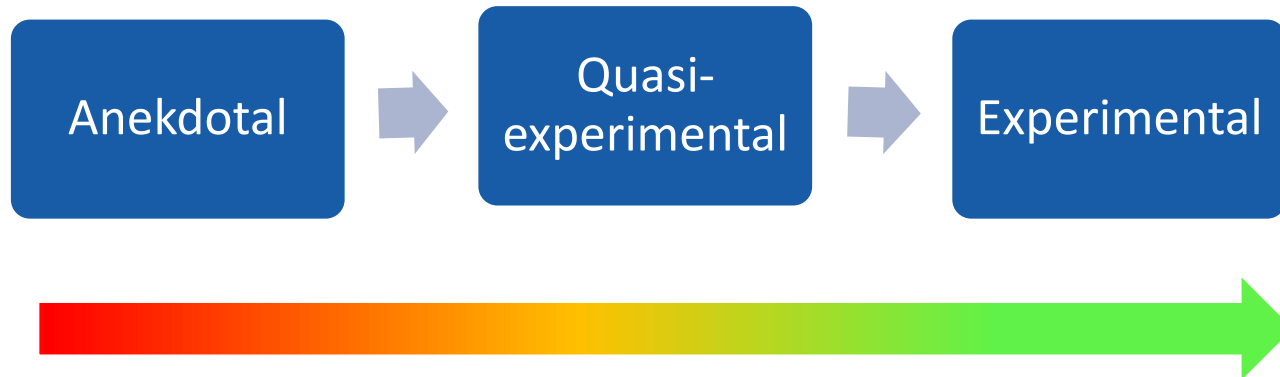
- What works for whom and in which circumstances?
- Evaluating interventions rigorously, with a small number of cases
- More methods possible



# Case study methodologies

1. Series of anecdotal descriptions based on narratives (Kazdin, 2011) (qualitative):
  - What, who, why, how?
  - Rich and direct observations;
  - Complexity and nuances of practices;
  - Not systematically measured;
  - Subjective
2. Pre test – post test design: longterm following of 1 individual (quantitative);
3. Multiple baseline design (AB) (mixed methods);
4. Cross over design (randomizing A and B moments) (mixed methods);
5. Alternate treatment design.
6. Systemic approach (Network members systematically give info about client / patient behavior during measure moments) (*mixed methods*)
7. Etc.

## N=1 designs: continuum of evidence



The extent to which the design covers alternative explanations

# Scientific impact

Case studies are in the hierarchy of evidence often rated as 'poor'. BUT...  
(Chambless & Ollendick, 2001)

- How to describe problems of clients?
- What kind of treatment is needed?
- Is a diagnose de-humanizing?
- How to group characteristics of clients?
- Each case is unique
- Problem with randomization
- Problem with generalization

## Focus on efficacy rather than on effectiveness

### **Well established treatments** (Chambless et al, 1998):

A large series of single case design experiments ( $n > 9$ ) is demonstrating efficacy. Conditions are:

- a. Use good experimental designs
- b. Compare the intervention to another treatment.

### FURTHER CRITERIA

- c. Treatment must be conducted with a manual.
- d. Characteristics of the client samples must be clearly specified.
- e. Effects must have been demonstrated by at least two different investigators or investigating teams.
- f. Instruments to measure treatment outcomes must be standardised, sensitive and specific.
- g. Treatment fidelity should be improved by training of therapists.

# Case study designs and PBE / EBP

Understanding practice after single case designs;

Implementing results from single case studies in practices

Referring to client-groups is mainstream. However: treatment goal is always defined on an individual level





## References

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