**Purpose**
The professional body of occupational therapy identifies client-centeredness as a necessary quality of the therapeutic relationship, despite evidence that it is not necessarily realized in practice. Although humility can help negotiate the power dynamic inherent in the therapeutic relationship, humility has not been explored or defined in the literature on therapeutic use of self.

**Research Question**
This study explores occupational therapists’ experience of the construct of humility in the therapeutic relationship.

**Methods**

**Design:** Qualitative; Phenomenological approach

**Participants:** three female occupational therapists with 3 to 10 years of experience from a variety of settings

**Data Collection:** semi-structured interview

**Data Analysis:** thematic coding beginning with analysis of concepts and then scanning for examples embedded within stories of the therapeutic relationship

**Results: Power/Humility**

**Hierarchy/Connection**
- Medical model and institutional structures create expectations
- Occupational therapists utilize humility in creating a collaborative relationship with the client
  - “We developed a really strong bond in terms of trust.”

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<tr>
<th>Pattern of Interference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Factors</td>
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<td>Points of tension</td>
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<td>OT and client</td>
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<td>Humility</td>
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**Parochial/Aware**
- Restricted perspective of client and plan of care
- Humility brings new perspective by letting go of prior assumptions and grasping bigger picture

“It was like a wake up moment for me…I don’t have full control, I need to be…more aware of what’s going on than I was…we’re just two human beings trying to make this work.”

**Discussion and Implications**
- Findings corroborate and expand upon the relationship between humility and power
- Occupational therapists in this study utilized humility to mitigate confounding influences in order to prioritize best care for their clients
- Utilization of humility in the therapeutic relationship resulted in a more trusting and collaborative relationship with the client, which in turn increased the quality of care
- Future research can explore relationships between humility and practitioner demographics (e.g. gender, experience), and potentially test whether a relationship exists between humility and client-centered practice

**References**