

Unplanned Endings: Case Studies

Rebecca

Rebecca has been attending psychotherapy for seven weeks. She is employed as a PA in a large company but has become increasingly agitated. She feels that people are 'out to get her' and is finding it increasingly difficult to trust. She has been making good use of the psychotherapy, but begins to miss some appointments. She then attends appointments and apologises for missing the previous ones, stating she is fully committed to attending. She does not attend any more appointments after that and does not respond to email contact (her preferred means of contact).

Rika

Rika has been coming to counselling for three months following the breakdown of a close relationship. She has been tearful throughout, struggling to cope with the nature of the end of the relationship. More recently, she has been expressing anger, which has surprised and shocked her. She has attended regularly throughout. You receive an email from her saying she was admitted to Accident and Emergency a few days previously following an overdose, and will not be attending any more counselling. She asks you not to contact her.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- 1 What are the possible reasons for Rebecca's non-attendance?
- 2 How might you use supervision to reflect on this further?
- 3 What are your feelings in response to Rika's email?
- 4 What are the possible explanations and what actions, if any, can you take?