

# Psychiatrist, Geriatric Psychiatry and Counseling Psychology

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## The danger of abrupt terminations in long-term psychotherapy due to ethical complaints

Paulina Fuentes Moad  
UNISA, USA

Contemporary contexts of psychotherapy highlight the importance of 'safety' in the therapeutic relationship. It is imperative to understand what 'safety' means to our patients/clients, as well as to us as providers, in order to provide the highest quality of care. While the frame and limitations of the therapeutic context provide certain psychological safety, it is also a set up that is bounded to rules and regulations that can challenge the therapy/counseling relationship in particular situations. In order to protect the wellbeing of the general public, ethical bodies implement guidelines and policies that can force psychotherapists to stop their practices, temporarily or permanently, immediately. The shattered sense of safety and transgression to the self, that such traumatic ruptures can unravel in our patients/clients, regardless of their diagnosis or lack of them, is atrocious; particularly in therapies that acknowledge and work with transference and countertransference. The unpreparedness to deal with traumatic ruptures raises questions and concerns about how we can better think and act when dealing with such situations, whether it happens to us, or by being the subsequent therapist of people who have suffered abuse in therapy or traumatic ruptures. This presentation explores hypothetical and real scenarios of people who are victims of abrupt termination of therapy or supervision due to ethical boundary violations. It describes the horrors that, such patients are exposed to and provides clinical guidelines and advice to subsequent therapists and survivors in order to better understand such a pervasive type of trauma that is often concealed.

### Biography

Paulina Fuentes Moad, PsyD, is a Boston-based Doctor in psychology, has spent most of her professional life examining the different methods of communication that can help people speak their truth. In radio, she served as a co-host and presenter for the talk show "NAMI Latino y la Comunidad." She is the Director and Founder of "Vive Con Vida, A.C.," which provides mental health education via online tools and media. She has trained in different treatment modalities, such as psychodynamic and behavioral therapy, and completed her internship at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School at the MGH Chelsea Healthcare Center.

[paulina\\_fuentesmoad@me.com](mailto:paulina_fuentesmoad@me.com)

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